3.75
Canada $4.75)

January 1996
Number 59

FIRST THINGS

the christian university
GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB / RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

the abortion cocktail
BERNARD N. NATHANSON

to be a prophet for the people
JONATHAN SACKS

what happened at beijing
MARY ANN GLENDON

post-communism & its discontents
TOMÁS HALÍK

islam partially perceived
BERNARD LEWIS

Opinions and Reviews: Swearing to Life & the Hippocratic Oath
Elizabeth Kristol on Andrew Sullivan · James Nuechterlein
John Rodden · Peter L. Berger · Nancy T. Ammerman · Paul J. Griffiths
Phillip E. Johnson · Gilbert Meilaender · Daniel N. Robinson

0 73361 64655 2 01

Featuring
The Public Square
A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HUNDREDS of classic moral stories to help shape your child's character — AND taste for good reading

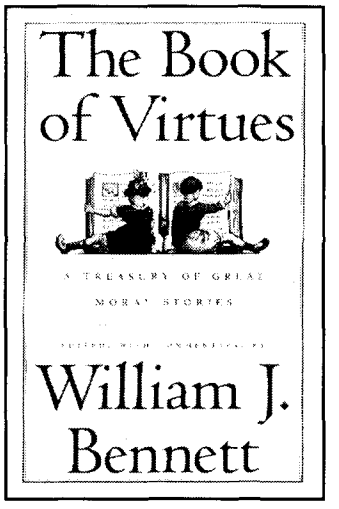
$30.00 in stores — yours FREE

Rush Limbaugh explains why he gives this extraordinary anthology by Reagan Cabinet member William Bennett his unqualified endorsement:

> "*The Book of Virtues* is built on an old philosophical principle nearly forgotten in the public discussion (and in certain recent presidential campaigns), but it is an idea I have long championed: Character matters. What a concept! But beware — some of the lessons in this book are rooted in religion, which means the anthology will be ruled unconstitutional if carried into an American school.
>
> It belongs, however, in every home. *The Book of Virtues* is a superb collection, certain to fortify you and yours for a life time of morality, goodness, and right thinking."

Mr. Bennett groups the selections according to the ten virtues or good habits they aim to instill:

Self-Discipline ★ Compassion ★ Responsibility ★ Friendship ★ Work ★ Courage ★ Perseverance ★ Honesty ★ Loyalty ★ Faith



Each section carries its own introductory essay, and the selections have explanatory notes where necessary. You get an amazing 384 selections. Most are stories, of course, but you also get generous helpings of inspiring verse.

The selections range from half a page to several pages — all short enough to be read aloud at bedtime, during a class or home-school session, or by young readers on their own. Adults will be delighted to meet many old favorites again, and to discover neglected gems that enriched the moral life of previous generations.

"America has long been in need of a C.S. Lewis . . . William J. Bennett, the former Secretary of Education and drug czar, may be as close in intellectual likeness to Lewis as America has had at the national level."
— CAL THOMAS

"Mr. Bennett has created a treasury no conservative parent would want to be without. For conservative parents know the role such stories can play in moral education. The early building of character depends heavily on examples, both in this world and in literature. . . . What Mr. Bennett has provided, then, is not just a source of enjoyment and literary education, but a contribution to moral literacy and a path back to social order for future generations."
— *National Review*

How to get this $30.00 treasury FREE

How the Club Works

Every 4 weeks (13 times a year) you get a free copy of the Club Bulletin which offers you the Featured Selection plus a good choice of Alternates — all of interest to conservatives. ★ If you want the Featured Selection, do nothing; it will come automatically. ★ If you don't want the Featured Selection, or you do want an Alternate, indicate your wishes on the handy card enclosed with your Bulletin and return it by the deadline date. ★ The majority of Club books are offered at 20-50% discounts, plus a charge for shipping and handling. ★ As soon as you buy and pay for 3 books at regular Club prices, your membership may be ended at any time, either by you or by the Club. ★ If you ever receive a Featured Selection without having had 10 days to decide if you want it, you may return it at Club expense for full credit. ★ The Club will offer regular Superbargains, mostly at 70-90% discounts plus shipping and handling. ★ Superbargains do NOT count toward fulfilling your Club obligation, but do enable you to buy fine books at giveaway prices. ★ Only one membership per household.

CONSERVATIVE BOOK CLUB

33 Oakland Avenue • Harrison, N.Y. 10528

Please accept my membership in the Club and send me FREE the 831-page, $30.00 *Book of Virtues* by William J. Bennett. I agree to buy 3 additional books at regular Club bargain prices over the next 18 months. I also agree to the Club rules spelled out in this coupon.

FT - 57

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FIRST THINGS

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

January 1996 • Number 59

CORRESPONDENCE 2 Judaism and anti-Christian America; the status of Jerusalem; science and papal teaching; Cardinal Krol ; ordination of RC women; political correctness; northernized Southern evangelicals

THIS TIME 7 *James Nuechterlein* Starting Over

OPINION 9 *John Rodden* Hard to Remember
Joseph Stanton, E. Joanne Angelo, and Marianne Rea-Luthin Swearing to Life
Peter L. Berger Berlin Again and Again

ARTICLES

16 The Christian University: *Gertrude Himmelfarb* A Call to Counterrevolution
Richard John Neuhaus Eleven Theses

23 *Bernard N. Nathanson* The Abortion Cocktail

27 *Jonathan Sacks* To Be a Prophet for the People

REPORTS 30 *Mary Ann Glendon* What Happened at Beijing

37 *Tomás Halík* Post-Communism and Its Discontents

REVIEW ESSAY 40 *Bernard Lewis* Islam Partially Perceived

BOOKS 45

Elizabeth Kristol Virtually Normal by Andrew Sullivan
Nancy T. Ammerman American Congregations edited by James P. Wind and James W. Lewis
Paul J. Griffiths Salvations by S. Mark Heim
Phillip E. Johnson Overcoming Law by Richard A. Posner
Gilbert Meilaender Theorizing Citizenship by Ronald Beiner
Daniel N. Robinson Responsibility and the Moral Sentiments by R. Jay Wallace; . . . *and* Briefly Noted

THE PUBLIC SQUARE 66 A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life
Richard John Neuhaus
This Month: John Paul II in New York, *etc.*
Poetry by *Jeanne Murray Walker* (8), *Bridget Ellen Muller* (22), *Daniel James Sundahl* (26), *Steven Lautermilch* (44)

Editor-in-Chief: *Richard John Neuhaus*
Editor: *James Nuechterlein*
Managing Editor: *Matthew Berke*
Associate Editor: *J. Bottum*
Poetry Editor: *Jill P. Baumgaertner*
Publisher: *Institute on Religion and Public Life*
Publishing Service: *Publishing Management Associates*

FIRST THINGS: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life (ISSN #1047-5141) is published monthly (except for combined issues June/July and August/September) for $29 per year by The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. Second class postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: send address changes to FIRST THINGS: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life, P.O. Box 3000 , Dept. FT, Denville, NJ 07834. **Editorial Offices:** The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. **Editorial Phone:** (212) 627-1985. **Advertising Offices:** 129 Phelps Avenue, Suite 312, Rockford, IL 61108. **Advertising Phone:** (815) 398-8569. **Subscription Department:** P.O. Box 3000, Dept. FT, Denville, NJ 07834. 1-800-783-4903. Unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage. Newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 2020 Superior Street, Sandusky, OH 44870. Copyright © 1996 by the Institute on Religion and Public Life. All rights reserved. Produced in the USA.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FIRST THINGS

FIRST THINGS is published by Religion and Public Life, an interreligious, nonpartisan research and education institute whose purpose is to advance a religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society. RPL also sponsors scholars conferences, consultations, research projects, public educational events, and a fellows program.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Peter Berger
Midge Decter
Stanley Hauerwas
Gertrude Himmelfarb
David Novak
Michael Novak
George Weigel

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Hadley Arkes
Walter Berns
James Burtchaell
David Dalin
Thomas Derr
Jean Bethke Elshtain
James Finn
Ernest Fortin
Suzanne Garment
Mary Ann Glendon
Bruce Hafen
Carl F. H. Henry
Russell Hittinger
Leonid Kishkovsky
Glenn Loury
George Marsden
Gilbert Meilaender
Max Stackhouse

Correspondence

Anti-Christian America?

As usual, I find myself in substantial agreement with much that Midge Decter writes ("A Jew in Anti-Christian America," October 1995)—in this instance, especially her healthy refusal to become paranoid about the glitches in the dominant society, and especially also her concern for Israel's security and well-being. If the largest vital Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant communities in the world are to live together in America in mutual civility and good humor, her quality of spiritual robustness combines with a sense of humor to create a better model than the litigants who make a Federal case out of every impoliteness or indiscretion.

Since I made the pilgrimage from Iowa to New York City about the same time she made the trek east from Minnesota, many of her discoveries about American religiosity may resonate with mine for reasons other than purely rational.

Why does the article, with which I agree in substance, leave me unhappy? Pondering this, I must conclude that my historical perspective is quite different; I cannot accept as true the concept of contemporary America as "anti-Christian." At best, such an idea has a place in an overwrought political or evangelistic sermon. But such an overheated setting can just as well give welcome to the truths conveyed by the shout that "God is dead!" or "Yet forty days and [the city] shall be destroyed!"

We could say that America is appallingly religious, confusing "spirituality" and "patriotism" and "Christianity" in an (un)holy and sweet-smelling potpourri. But then why is an intellectual as well versed in the Bible as Midge Decter yet unable to identify that sweet smell of incense with the idolatrous "high places" (1 Kings 3:2)? We could say with some church historians that America is the last great intact block of the nineteenth-century *Kulturreligion* ("Christendom"). We might hear the cultural historians who say America is "*post*-Christian," or the lively evangelists who proclaim it "*pre*-Christian." But "anti-Christian" it is not.

Militant anticlericalism and atheism have been the characteristic products of the union of church and state, particularly since the Enlightenment exposed alternative systems of being. Religious liberty, with its "free churches" (a generic term), does not arouse the kind of hatred of Christianity that appeared in European Christendom in its decline.

But religious liberty, with its voluntary participation and support, also requires that a distinction be made between "Christians" and gentiles—a distinction that neither Jews nor Christians have been accustomed to make in Europe, where of the 96 percent "Christians" counted in a Lutheran country less than 5 percent have any effective connection with the church, and of the 99 percent "Christians" counted in a Roman Catholic land only 11 percent go to one confession and one mass a year.

What has been the course of Christianity in the New World? For half of our history in English, French, and Spanish North America, we followed the model of European state churches. But from the beginning there were Mennonites, radical Puritan churches (e.g., Baptists, Quakers), radical Pietist churches (e.g., Brethren, Moravians) and other radical reformers who *always* made the necessary separation between the claims of the faith and the ways of the world. It cannot be said that these Christians, far more influential in America than ever in European Christendom, "did not think about it" (i.e., "Christian America"). Thinking about it and talking about it and living the differences between the present reality and the coming Kingdom was their major activity.

Christianity in America is no longer a chip off European "Christendom": with the Virginia Bill (1786) and First Amendment (1789-91) it became religiously unique, although now its setting and style are shared with the new and vital Christians of Africa and the Pacific Rim. Midge Decter would serve well her-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

self and the rest of us to remember the uniqueness of the American experiment in religious liberty, which, among other things, means that America is a gentile country, with substantial minorities of Protestants and Roman Catholics and a smaller minority of Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Baha'i, and other proferred options.

Franklin H. Littell
Professor Emeritus of Religion
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA

Midge Decter's otherwise compelling article seems to me to have a major flaw. She writes that an indictment of the European Enlightment as the source of "our troubles" is "at once too convenient and too iniquitously ungrateful for either a Jew or a Christian to entertain."

Indeed, it would be criminal for Jews to make light of the hope of liberty (and, sometimes, of the reality of liberty) that the Enlightenment awakened. I agree. Letting the Enlightenment wholly off the hook, she locates the source of our troubles in a less hallowed time: the sixties. It was the sixties that sanctified a mounting civilizational hubris ("why not?"); an egoism indifferent to everything but its own hedonism ("so what?").

I do not think that this is an adequate or fair Jewish response to the sixties. The period deserves, at least, the same qualified ambivalence as the Enlightenment, for much of Jewish worth emerged from it. I doubt that the surge of Jewish studies in the universities or of scholarly and popular work on Jewish mysticism would have occured without the cultural upheavals and reorientations of the sixties. I doubt that the havurah movement and the energy it tapped for a generation of rabbis and lay leaders could have occurred without the sixties. (Would there be any Chabad houses on American college campuses?)

The sixties gave a new cachet and legitimacy to ethnicity and spirituality. American Jewish life has been a beneficiary. There remains, of course, much about that period and its effects to regret. Certainly, it was not entirely "good for the Jews." But it seems to me "too convenient" to ignore its contributions.

Alan Mittleman
Muhlenberg College
Allentown, PA

Midge Decter replies:

First, let me thank both my correspondents for their kind words. As for Professor Littell's argument with me, I am frankly at something of a loss to understand what he really means when he calls America a "gentile country with substantial minorities of Protestants and Roman Catholics," etc. *Gentile*? This seems to me a very odd use of the term. Is it not, perhaps, merely a euphemism? Does he not, when all is said and done, really mean a *secular* country? If that is what he does mean, the answer to him is, "Well, yes and no." There are surely a lot of secularists around; if there weren't, we wouldn't all be engaged in this discussion in the first place. But it still, as the old joke has it, seems to make all the difference in the world whether you are a Christian secularist or a Marxist secularist. Joking aside, the American Revolution was not the French Revolution. That in fact was, and remains, its glory—it was a product not of the new intellectuals against the old order but of people seeking to manage their political affairs in a decent and enlightened manner. The kind of tolerance that is uniquely enshrined in the American political order, while, to be sure, not "a chip off European Christendom," was on the other hand certainly not born in some mythically neutral "gentiledom," either. True, it is the product of a long historical process, but surely the view of man central to that process was Jewish-Christian, rather than merely "a proferred option."

With Alan Mittleman, I'm afraid, the differences run so deep they cannot be bridged. If he finds the havurah movement to have been a source of spiritual energy, and I understand it—correctly, as I believe history will one day show—as an attempt to import some of the attitudinal junk food of the counterculture into the theory and practice of Judaism, what can we say to one another? There remain only a couple of details to sort out. The great interest in Jewish mysticism of the sixties had little to do with scholarship, and the great scholarship in the field of Jewish mysticism had nothing to do with the sixties. The Chabad houses on American college campuses initially owed much of their momentum to the fact that they were undertaking to rescue young Jewish druggies and other kids who were feeling the pain of the emptiness of their own culture and making religious penitents of them. Now they represent not the result of, but precisely a counterforce to, the various "isms" that are the legacy of those radical years and that have been permitted to worm their way into the fabric of Jewish relgious life.

Whose Jerusalem?

The Public Square article "There Is Only One Jerusalem" (October 1995) struck me as unusually aggressive and hateful as to its attitude to the historic Jewish claim to Jerusalem. Such a hostile tone is fortunately not often heard anymore, except in leftist PLO circles where reason and historic facts do not count.

The 3,000 years of history of Jerusalem have been an almost unbroken history of one nation or religion after the other attempting to wrest the city from the Jews, as if the whole world cannot tolerate the idea that Jews, too, have a capital of their own. Starting with Assyrian King Sennacherib, Babylonia's Nebuchadnezzar, Greece's Antiochus Epiphanes, Rome's Pompeii, Titus, Vespasian, and Hadrian, the Muslim armies of Omar, the Christian Crusaders, down to today's PLO, all have one thing in common: Jerusalem must not belong to the Jews.

It is true, as Father Neuhaus writes, that certain events in Christian history took place in Jerusalem. But what were they and how long did they last? Whatever the Gospels tell us about Jesus, his visit to Jerusalem and ultimate execution by the Romans there took place because he

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was a Jew, like all others who visited Jerusalem to attend the Jewish Temple. His presence there lasted only a few days.

When Fr. Neuhaus invokes the argument that "Christian sons also fought for it and won," he presumably refers to the valiant Crusaders who in 1099 captured Jerusalem and promptly butchered every Jew in the city. Not much of a claim.

As to the Muslim claim, we all know that Jerusalem is not mentioned a single time in the Koran (but 825 times in the Hebrew Bible) and that the Aksa Mosque of today was the Church of St. Mary of the Byzantine Christians till eighty years after Muhammad's death. Even if we accept the legend (appropriately called "mirage" in Arabic) of Muhammad's flight to heaven on his horse Baraq (which is only found in a few Arab sources), one can ask how long the hoof of that horse rested on the Rock of the Mountain to propel itself heavenward.

How can these short-lived episodes compare with the Jewish history of Jerusalem, which goes back 3,000 years to King David? . . .

As to the complaint that the Christian population in Jerusalem (and in Bethlehem) is dwindling, every unbiased Christian in Israel will tell you that this is caused by Muslim pressure. Pastor John Willem van der Heuven, the head of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, has often begged the world to maintain Israeli rule over Jerusalem and Bethlehem, lest the Christian shrines there share the fate of churches in Lebanon during the PLO occupation, when they were destroyed and Christian worshippers massacred. Not to speak of the Jewish synagogues in Jerusalem, every one of which was destroyed by the Jordanians during their nineteen-year occupation of the city. . . .

For those who want all shrines protected in the future, the best guarantee is a Jewish rule over an undivided Jerusalem, the eternal Jewish capital.

Manfred R. Lehmann
Leadership Committee for a
Free Middle East
Miami, FL

RJN replies:

The comment was not hostile. It was sharply critical of what I took to be the *New Republic*'s peremptory dismissal of Christian and Muslim interests in Jerusalem. I will leave it to Muslims to respond to the significance of the horse's hoof, but in Christian conviction the point is not that Jesus was in Jerusalem "only a few days," but that in those few days the world's redemption was accomplished. More comprehensively, from the Psalms that are prayed also by Christians through the book of Revelation, the earthly Jerusalem is symbolically entangled with the promise of the heavenly Jerusalem. For a considered examination of these questions, I again recommend Robert L. Wilken's *The Land Called Holy* (Yale University Press). As to whether Jewish governance is the best guarantee for all the interests involved, I said as much in my original comment.

Against Swinishness

Peter L. Berger, in his "Military Necessities" (October 1995), has inadvertently made an excellent case for Christian nonparticipation in the military. To quote Mr. Berger: "Like it or not, a measure of swinishness has been intrinsic to what makes soldiers tick."

That any man (or woman) created in the image of God should be trained to kill efficiently on command, and in the process should become "swinish," is a tragedy. For a Christian to subject himself to such training, and thus deliberately debase God's image within himself, verges on blasphemy. . . .

Paul C. Fox, M.D.
Farmington, PA

While Peter Berger's comments about gays and women in combat units provide some basis for limiting their participation, he does not discuss the most important consideration. Combat units should be manned (personned?) not with the most benign or even average situations in mind but with the worst.

The mining of the frigate USS *Samuel B. Roberts* during the Gulf War is a recent case in point. The superhuman effort required to shore bulkheads, patch underwater holes in the hull, and perform many other essential damage control actions would not have been possible had a large fraction of the crew been women. They just don't have the necessary strength and leverage. As it was, the saving of the ship was a near-run thing, as the Duke of Wellington described his victory at Waterloo. . . .

Robert C. Whitten
Cupertino, CA

Science and Infallibility

Surely, the scholarly Avery Dulles ("The Gospel of Life: A Symposium," October 1995) knows that one may not kill what is even doubtfully "not yet a human person." I may not even shoot at a moving target that I presume is a deer when I have any suspicion that it may be human.

The "science" upon which much abortion bioethics is based has been disproven and is false. I dare any biological scientist to establish that the embryo in the early stages is not yet a full human person as a subject of rights. The redefinition of pregnancy as beginning at implantation has been invented as a pure fiction to rationalize abortion of a "pre-embryo," a term that no responsible human embryologist accepts as valid. . . . Neither Dulles nor Fr. Richard McCormick can scientifically establish that "the embryo in early stages is not yet a fully human person." The scientific evidence since *Roe v. Wade* is overwhelmingly against any scientific support for it or the later *Webster* decision. . . .

On another point, there appears to be no formula to guarantee that an infallible teaching must be accepted as such. One can always, it seems, deny an irreformable teaching to be infallibly taught by requiring a formula for definition that nowhere previously exists. On this basis someone could deny the Immaculate Conception or the Assumption as infallibly taught. . . .

H. Vernon Sattler, C.Ss.R.
Professor Emeritus
University of Scranton
Scranton, PA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Avery Dulles replies:

Father Sattler evidently holds that there can be no justified doubts regarding the presence of "fully human life" in the early stages of the development of the embryo, but many experts disagree. I do not know how one could prove the presence of a spiritual soul from the moment of conception, and the Pope, as I interpret him, allows for some legitimate diversity of opinion on this point. I accept the principle that forbids the direct killing of even doubtful human life. Whether other moral theologians agree is for them to say.

The question whether the three key propositions in *Evangelium Vitae* are infallible will continue to be discussed. One reason for hesitation is the statement of Cardinal Ratzinger that the term "infallible," present in earlier drafts, was dropped from the final text. Whether one uses the term "infallible" or not, one must recognize that the Pope claims to be setting forth the universal and definitive teaching of the magisterium, based on Scripture and Tradition. He does not, however, invoke his powers to make an ex cathedra definition, with all the canonical consequences that such a definition would entail. Earlier popes, in proclaiming the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, declared them to be dogmas revealed by God, to be believed on a motive of divine faith under pain of heresy. No such language is contained in the present encyclical. As Ratzinger said in his press conference, John Paul II stopped "short of the formality of dogmatization." Father Sattler seems to overlook this difference, which I take to be significant.

More Than a Rant

Janet Marsden's review of E. Michael Jones' biography of Cardinal Krol (October 1995) begins by calling it "a disjointed rant," but proceeds to underscore its extraordinary importance. As a biography of the Cardinal, it departs at times from His Eminence, seeming to use him merely as a point of departure to explore other things. Even so, the Cardinal comes out standing tall. At least with respect to two issues in which I was deeply involved—government family planning and freedom of parental choice in education—I can testify to Jones' accuracy in describing what proved to be fateful developments.

The first issue concerned not merely the unprecedented idea of using taxpayers' money to promote contraception but also that of bringing the coercive power of government to bear upon the poor. The Gruening family planning bill, described by Mr. Jones, was designed as an opening move for American population control. Disgracefully, critics of *Humanae Vitae* within the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC) deliberately undermined the efforts of Archbishops Krol and O'Boyle (and, notably, Bishop John Wright) to oppose the Gruening bill and its Planned Parenthood supporters. I deem it a blessing that Jones was granted full access to the Krol files so that the story of those events could at last be brought to light. Unhappily, the major constitutional issues involved in government family planning still remain largely unconfronted. . . .

Thanks to Cardinal O'Boyle, the Human Life and Natural Family Planning Foundation came into existence in 1968 as a positive response to Paul VI's call in *Humanae Vitae* for scientific research on human reproduction. All too widely in the Church today that encyclical is a dead letter and pastoral instruction on its precepts largely nonexistent. It is hence not surprising that the population planners have greatly succeeded. But the genesis of their whole development can be found in the events of thirty years ago. Church leaders today should learn from those events, and for that Mr. Jones is "must" reading.

The second issue in Mr. Jones' book that I can personally say he deals with accurately is that of freedom of parental choice in education. His story of the events that culminated in the *Lemon* and *Tilton* cases is highly instructive in light of the continuing efforts today of Catholics, Orthodox Jews, and evangelicals to achieve parental freedom. As in the case of government family planning, forces within the Church sabotaged the best efforts of the best of our bishops. This came about by the move of NCWC staff to bring about a Supreme Court decision in line with the secular academic thinking among Catholic educators that Mr. Jones so well describes. That effort succeeded in the case known as *Tilton v. Richardson*. FIRST THINGS readers interested in that development will find the picture completed in my book, *Mere Creatures of the State*.

The NCWC bankrolled a legal defense of federal grants to colleges in Connecticut based on the secularization of those colleges. The success of that defense gives Catholic college presidents today the pretext ("Without federal money, we will have to close our doors") to defy *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*—John Paul II's apostolic constitution on Catholic universities—and those few bishops who insist on observance of that document.

William B. Ball
Harrisburg, PA

Whose Obstacle?

I read with interest "That They May Be One" (Public Square, October 1995). As a well-educated religious woman, I don't comprehend Father Neuhaus' rather jaundiced statement that women's ordination is "a major obstacle to unity." Let's put the shoe on the other foot for a change: rather, many Anglicans and Lutherans have looked at sexism as the sin that it is, and have called women as ministers for their churches. The Vatican, on the other hand, continues with business as usual, refusing to admit that its sexist attitudes are a major stumbling block. . . .

Carol Bodenheimer
Winston Salem, NC

Not Necessarily PC

David Love Glazer ("FT Goes PC?" Correspondence, October 1995) complains about RJN's use of "a politically correct *their* in place of the grammatically correct *his*" in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

examples "Anyone can, for instance, publish a novel titled *Moby Dick*, so long as *they* put *their* name on it" and "Everybody worth *their* salt in sociology..." Mr. Glazer takes this as the first step on the slippery slope toward transmogrifying God the Father/Son into God the Parent/Child. In fact, these are two distinct cases. I agree with him on the stupidity of the latter, but it does us no good to mix it with the former. A letter does not permit full explication of the problem, but I can give some indications.

To begin with, English does not have a generic *he*. The generic-*he* rule of English grammar was invented in the eighteenth century. As nearly as I can tell, it first appeared in a grammar by a man named Dinnsen in 1731. He reasoned approximately as Mr. Glazer did: *everybody* is singular but not explicitly feminine; therefore, it must be masculine and should be replaced by *he*.

There are three flaws in this reasoning. First, the initial premise is wrong. Everybody is not necessarily singular: *Everybody* waved at the guest of honor and she (or he, depending on the guest's sex) waved back at them. Second, though *everybody* is not explicitly feminine, neither is it explicitly masculine. Thus the second premise is incomplete. As a result, the inferences drawn by Dinnsen and Mr. Glazer do not follow. It is at least as valid to reason that, since *everybody* is not explicitly masculine, it must be feminine and should be replaced by *she*. Of course, this is also an incorrect conclusion.

Conversely, English does have a generic pronoun, and it is *they*. Alfred the Great used it in the ninth century and so did Cardinal Newman in the nineteenth.The former defined Old English, and the latter is generally recognized as a good stylist of Modern English. Neither was a barbarian. Moreover, I conducted an extensive study in the early 1980s. In truly generic cases, *somebody, everybody, nobody*, and the like are replaced by *they* almost 85 percent of the time, by *he* or *you* about 6 percent of the time each, and by *he/she* about 3 percent of the time. Thus, even after two and a half centuries of indoctrination by English teachers (all of mine were women), the generic-*he* rule is not observed. I do sympathize with Mr. Glazer on this basis, however: women (teachers) made him learn the rule and now women (militant feminists) attack anyone who observes what women taught him.

To take another case, consider the masculine pronoun in "he who has ears to hear, let him hear." This usage is the result of a translation from a language with a structure differing from that of English in having grammatical gender. I haven't the space to expand on this question here. Suffice it to say that a better translation would be "Whoever has ears to hear, let 'em hear." The listener can then decide whether the *'em* is a contraction of *them* or of *him*.

In short, RJN stands falsely accused, and as a professional linguist who has published extensively but to no avail on the above subjects, I argue for dismissal of the charges.

However, in the matter of the neutering of God, I suspect Neuhaus, Glazer, and I agree. It shouldn't be necessary to point out that Jesus was male, so *God the Son* is a factual epithet. *The Holy Child* also has its place, but its place does not include usurpation of *the Son*. *He* is obligatory for Jesus. Nor should it be necessary to point out that Jesus referred to His Father, Who had sent Him. The correct pronoun for *father* is also *he*. There is no pronominal reference obligatory for the Holy Spirit. But since two of the three persons are *He* and since we are dealing with one God, *He* cannot possibly be wrong. Anyone who finds it offensive can do whatever they like, but they should not be permitted to bully the rest of us into denying both Scripture and Tradition.

I hope this clears things up.

William J. Sullivan
Gainesville, FL

Northernizing the Evangelicals

I would like to point out that, in addition to demonstrating wishful thinking, Michael Lind's *New Republic* article profoundly misunderstands the historic role of evangelical Protestantism in American public life ("Conservatism? What Conservatism?" Public Square, October 1995).

Rather than southernizing the nation, politically active evangelicals have themselves been "northernized" in their attitudes. This is ably pointed out in James Reichley's book *Religion in American Public Life* (Brookings, 1985) and in D. G. Hart's *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

Like the northern Protestants of the nineteenth century, today's politically active evangelicals (Southern and otherwise) support family values and a more accommodationist understanding of the First Amendment. Southern evangelicals have also publicly repented of their previous quiescence in the face of racial injustice and have sought better relations with black Christians. This trend is further reinforced by the Southern evangelicals' emphasis on world mission and outreach in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. It is most unjust to link Southern evangelicalism as a whole with doctrines of white supremacy or separatism or anti-Semitism. I'm a Catholic myself and disagree with evangelical Protestants on many important issues, but I don't like seeing them gratuitously slandered.

Another striking development in Southern evangelicalism is a neo-Puritan encouragement of economic initiative, education, and the work ethic. Not that these concerns have ever been absent in the South, but they show a mentality quite different from both old-style Southern conservatism and sixties-style liberalism. Like their northern antecedents in Lincoln's day, the new evangelicals have naturally been drawn to the Republican Party....

So I think Michael Lind would be more accurate to say that Northern church life and Lincoln's GOP have at last taken root in the South—and under the rubric of conservatism, yet!

Who would have expected it?

W. Robert Aufill
Princeton, NJ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This Time

Starting Over

James Nuechterlein

The thing I miss most about academic life—summers aside—is its constant promise of new beginnings. Each semester offers a fresh start and the beguiling hope: surely this time I will get it right. My lectures got bogged down in detail; this time they will never lose sight of the big picture. (Or they were too general and this time they will be anchored in hard data.) My seminars were too structured; this time I will allow room for freewheeling discussion. (Or they were too undisciplined and this time I will keep them rigorously on topic.) Twice a year—more if you're on quarters—you get a chance to reinvent yourself, if only in the classroom. And on the first day of class we're all good teachers.

It might be supposed that the life of an editor is much the same. Every issue, after all, offers a new beginning. But the breaks aren't as clean. You don't move from issue to issue in distinct progression. You're always working on three issues at once: one for which you're correcting final proofs and blue lines, one for which you're editing copy, one for which you're deciding the contents. It's all a blur, which is why when friends ask what's coming up in the next issue and you can't immediately answer, the reason is something other (you hope) than incipient Alzheimer's. There's no clear beginning and end, just constant process.

Starting over—the idea appeals to all of us, and not only in our jobs. This explains the otherwise (to me) inexplicable appeal of the New Year's holiday. New year, new possibility. This time I'll get it right.

And so we make New Year's resolutions. We'll be thinner, healthier, more disciplined, less anxious, kinder to spouses and colleagues, slower to anger and swifter to bless—just all-around better people. Most such resolutions, of course, have a notoriously short half-life. New years soon enough look like old years, and new lives like old lives.

Teaching was like that, to tell the truth. For all my resolutions to fix what was wrong, my teaching evaluations read much the same from semester to semester—and so did those of my colleagues. During my years at Queen's University in Canada, our teaching evaluations were published and circulated. They had, we soon discovered, a fixed and seemingly unalterable predictability. Things changed at the margins, but that was all. Last year's popular teachers were also this year's, and Professor X was as boring in the spring semester as he had been in fall.

Not only did our relative popularity rankings remain pretty much the same, so also did the reasons for them. In my case, my seminar students *always* said, on the positive side, that I was well-organized and knowledgeable. (Of course, any professor who can't persuade undergraduates that he knows his subject should find a new line of work.) They usually said that I was enthusiastic and open to points of view other than my own. On the negative side, they regularly said that I graded too hard and allowed insufficient latitude in discussion. And they *always* said, one way or another, that I talked too much.

It's not surprising that our evaluations changed so little over time. Styles of teaching have to do with fundamental traits of temperament, and the injunction, "change your teaching," is the equivalent of "change your personality." Not many of us can or do accomplish that. One year, in response to student criticisms, I determined to become more flexible and less controlling in conducting my classes. It was a fiasco. Since I didn't really believe in open-ended discussion (the classroom is not a bull session)—and the students could sense I didn't—I lost the virtue of disciplined inquiry without gaining that of creative exchange. After that failed experiment I went back to my strengths and learned to live with the corresponding weaknesses.

All of which explains, by analogy, why New Year's resolutions so regularly fail. Not always, of course (I did manage one year to stop smoking). But they succeed best when focused on very specific behaviors, not on new modes of being that require transformations of character.

I concede uneasily that this is not the dominant vocabulary of Christian moral discourse. Christians characteristically speak of radical reorderings of life, of lives made new in Christ. Evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics alike talk the language of perfection, of the Christian pilgrimage as that toward ever more perfect conformity to the imitation of Christ. I understand why they speak that way, why in a certain sense they have to speak that way, but that understanding of the moral life simply does not coincide with the reality of what I see in the lives of others or what I experience in my own.

That is not to say that radical transformations do not occur. They do, and they are miracles of grace, but they are not the norm. Most of us experience our moral endeavors neither as fundamental reinventions of self nor as progressive steps on a journey toward perfection. We do not necessarily improve morally as we grow older. More usually, we exchange one set of vices (and virtues) for another. We outgrow youthful passions; we lose youth's enthusiasm and openness. When there is growth in grace it is not typically either

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dramatic in nature or radical in direction. It is less a remaking of self than a making better—maybe even making the most—of the variously imperfect people we are.

This may sound like a recipe for moral resignation or complacency. It can of course become that. But, I would argue, it is faithful to the reality of the moral lives of most of us. When Luther insisted that we are beggars before God he was acknowledging, without accepting or minimizing, our damnable failure to live up to the demands of radical discipleship. We never do "get it right." Radical failure throws us back on radical grace. As Augustine said, "Our very righteousness . . . is yet in this life of such a kind that it consists rather in the remission of sins than in the perfecting of virtues."

God made us for perfection, and our inability to live that way makes our moral lives a muddle at best. Yet we have no choice but to live in that muddle, giving in neither to moral lethargy nor to fantasies of moral purity. Start over? Of course: after every act of confession, every word of forgiveness. And so on tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. It would all be quite absurd if it didn't have a happy ending. But it does, and that, out of pure gratuity, blesses the muddle. FT

The Grudge

When he died he weighed sixty pounds,
the paper says, and I go out of my way
to drive by the address where his brother
locked him in the closet, wondering at
the blue door, the flower boxes,
wondering where the fury started,
how early and how hidden the first bruise
awaking like a bat, dark wings beating like mad
beneath his skin, the grudge pretending
to fold itself and go to sleep. Years later,
some old random gesture startles it awake.
For instance, when Esau finally staggers home,
hypoglycemic, clothes torn, hungry,
Jacob sees his chance. He buys
the old farm from his brother for a crockpot
of lamb stew. Jacob would tell you
how, from the beginning he was the oldest
anyway. *We were twins,* he'd say reasonably,
stirring the soup, *Esau poked his finger out
first so they tied a red thread to it
But I was the first one out! Me! There are records
to prove it.* It's hideous, when
you think about it, how everything followed
from that. You would like Jacob. Quick,
witty. He would flick his coat open
to show you the grudge, nursing like a bat.

Jeanne Murray Walker

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Opinion

Hard to Remember

John Rodden

"It's easier for you in the West," Baerbel Hintze says. "You've been educated to think critically. I haven't. And it's still a great difficulty for me."

Frau Baerbel Hintze is a history teacher at the Schiller Gymnasium in Weimar—formerly the Schiller EOS [Advanced High School], one of the elite Communist secondary schools in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). We have just left her twelfth-grade class on Bertolt Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, and I have been asking her whether she taught *Galileo* any differently during the GDR era. No, she says. *Galileo* expresses Brecht's views as a socialist, antifascist, and critic of religious dogma. I suggest that play also offers an opportunity to criticize the Communist dogmas of the GDR regime, which never tolerated any freethinking Galileos.

Frau Hintze, a former Party member herself, nods her head.

"When I teach the *Galileo* again, I'd like to explore that. But that approach feels very unfamiliar—threatening even, though exciting." Why? Her answers are various. She was never educated toward "critical thinking." Her studies and her continuing education seminars never suggested such an approach. She feared losing her job if she said anything too controversial.

We discuss Brecht's famous line, "Whoever doesn't know the truth is an idiot. But whoever knows it and calls it a lie is a criminal." But Frau Hintze resists any attempt to apply Brecht's line to the GDR.

"We weren't criminals or idiots. Just human beings—with vulnerabilities and weaknesses. Just ordinary people who never lost hope that they could one day improve things." Faith in ordinariness was one of Brecht's key points. "He was challenging the notion that little people are helpless, and that only the extraordinary people—the heroes—can change things." She pauses. Then she draws the connection. Holding to a faith in ordinary people is "why October 1989 finally arrived."

Frau Hintze repeats the phrase "critical thinking" several times during our conversation. It seems to be a term of high approbation for her, somehow related to the strongest virtues of the West—a bold questioning of hierarchy and of received answers, a searching inventory of one's responsibilities in the face of unjust authority, a healthy scrutiny of oneself.

"I had no *Auseinandersetzung* [freewheeling debate] in my studies, only Marxism-Leninism. We were fed teachers' opinions and the verdicts of authorities. I learned to cite authorities—a Party document, a state official, a Marxist touchstone—as proof and defense of all positions. And so I never really took seriously any oppositional viewpoint. It wasn't an occasion for thinking about my own viewpoint. It was 'incorrect.' It was just 'oppositional,' and an energetic standard response would neutralize its power.

"Only one opinion on a topic reigned in the GDR," she continues. "And I didn't take into account other opinions. Not really. There were never any other opinions to take seriously into account. Everything was walled in—quite literally. You've heard the phrase? It's true: The Wall was in our heads.

"And one doesn't unlearn all this quickly. At least not at my age. Until you spoke in class, I never thought about non-Marxist ways of teaching Brecht—even though, I grant you, it's been five years since the *Wende* [turn]. I could give lip service to the statement, 'There are a variety of interpretations possible,' but I never really conceived of any serious opinion outside the Marxist Weltanschauung.

"You have to understand all this historically," Frau Hintze adds. "Even after Prague [the Soviet and GDR invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968], I never met a critical thinker. I never learned how to do that, I never encountered anybody who was doing it. We were directed in our course of studies in college to think a certain way. And I learned that particular way of thinking. This is probably very hard for you to understand, because it is just as natural for you to think critically as it was for me to think dialectically.

"The pupils here still aren't educated to think critically," she adds, "because thinking is very hard to do at all in the midst of the confusion and turmoil and upheaval of this transition from the GDR. Too many teachers still teach ideologically: they begin with the ready-made answer. And they emphasize rote textbook learning, rather than foster independence of mind and the awareness of diverse viewpoints. The kids go by others' cues and escape into distractions and sloganeering, rather than do the hard work of thinking—whether 'critically' or 'dialectically.'

"And they still feel self-constrained and are biased against critical thinking, which really starts with what the Party called 'self-criticism.' But 'self-criticism' for us was really an apologia to the Party for individualistic excesses."

Self-criticism was what one hoped to avoid: it was a public act of repentance for one's hubris or disloyalty—an acknowledgment of having been a bad Marxist. "The idea of your Western self-criticism—that one includes oneself in all criticism, or even

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

begins with oneself and one's own side—is very unfamiliar and threatening to us.

"In 1978, I began teaching at this school. In 1985, at age forty-three, I joined the Party. It was a pragmatic decision. The Schiller EOS was one of the best schools in the state. It was an important school for producing university candidates, and the director wanted more Party members, above all in my subjects, German and history. The director told us that, if there were any transfers, Party members would have the best chance of remaining at the school. So I joined.

"Everybody had been saying for years that an EOS history teacher like me should be in the Party. I had a tough time fending off the pressure to join. And teaching history was so hard—especially eleventh grade, which dealt with the workers' movement since 1848, and twelfth grade, which covered the history of the Communist Party since 1945. At times I hated it. That had to do with my family: my parents were skeptical about the Party and GDR. My father had a position in church administration; before the war, he was a civil servant. When he joined the church and began working for it, he naturally gravitated toward the opposition voices and was constantly among people who were suspected by the regime of activities hostile to the state.

"I was never really a supporter of the regime, but I conformed. I was a careerist like most of my friends and colleagues—we constituted 85 percent of the Party."

What about events that were contested between East German and West German historians? Did you ever have any doubts about the Party line?

"Strangely enough, no. For instance, the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939 was skipped in my studies. And in later years I don't remember ever discussing it with a colleague. I never knew about it. And not just that event. I never knew much about Stalin. When all the news about his regime of terror came out, I couldn't believe it.

"You see, I 'knew'—and I didn't know. I had heard various things over the years, but I had never discussed Stalin—he was effectively screened out of my course of studies and the history curriculum of the school. There was a wall around him. I never knew that he murdered millions of people.

"And that was a blind spot of mine. Pupils would occasionally ask in history class: But did the *Volk* know about the Holocaust? I would say: the Nazi grandparents could have known if they chose to see. I took a hard line on that: Who wanted to know, did know. But who really *wanted* to know? The very knowledge made you complicit—or put you in great danger. And who would take the risks? For most people, it all depended on the people with whom you were in close contact, and whether they were being directly victimized or not.

"Who wanted to know, did know: I always said that about the Nazi years. That's what I believed—and, for the most part, still believe."

Frau Hintze pauses. Her eyes are pools of tears. "And what about us?" she finally asks. "Us" meaning citizens of the GDR. She does not imply that the crimes of the Nazis and the Communist dictatorship are equivalent. Her question simply exemplifies, she says, Western "critical thinking."

"I gathered that there were some 'excesses' of Party zeal [in Stalin's USSR], attributable to the difficult post-revolutionary [post-1917] conditions and, later, the war. I knew that Khrushchev spoke about a 'cult of personality' around Stalin, but I had never participated in that cult, and I didn't think it was anything more than hero-worship. I was a fourteen-year-old girl in 1956, very unpolitical. Khrushchev's speech, Poland, Hungary—they all swept by me. In the 1970s and '80s, I heard the name Solzhenitsyn. But I knew nothing about his work. It simply never filtered down to me."

And if you—as a history teacher in an elite school didn't know any of this history—then certainly the general population of the GDR would have had little likelihood of knowing, of developing the informed skepticism of "critical thinkers."

"Right. The Wall was in their heads too."

What about the erection of the Berlin Wall in August 1961? Certainly that event was—and remained—inescapable.

"Yes, but I was studying in Dresden at the time. We were far from Berlin. I never really reacted strongly to the erection of the Wall. The West was already inaccessible to us—you couldn't go there unless you had a special reason. And I never thought of emigrating. I couldn't have taught school in West Germany—GDR teaching credentials weren't recognized there. And though I had been in Cologne and West Berlin a few times in the 1950s, my relatives were in the GDR. And they were aging and needed me to help care for them. I had a strong *Heimatgefuhl* [feeling of home]. The Wall didn't change anything for us—just made us turn further inward.

"The truth was kept at a distance from us. The government kept it from us and didn't cultivate, or even allow, critical thinking. And so that is the question: In a society like the GDR, how do you get to the truth?"

The truth is difficult, Frau Hintze acknowledges, and poses difficulties once it is ascertained. Difficult to discern, difficult to express if discerned, difficult to share publicly if capable of expression. "If you did ask, you would receive only a confused, ambiguous answer, anyway. And if you kept on asking, that would be dangerous. You had to be ready to go to jail. You had to be prepared to part forever from your family. You had to be ready to lose your career and your friends."

Frau Hintze looks out the window. Then she turns and faces me. "You had to be a hero. I was never a hero. I couldn't be a hero. I just didn't have it in me.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"But I had a limit," she continues. "I wouldn't inform. I never did work and never would have worked for the *Stasi*. That was a line I wouldn't cross, and I have little sympathy today for those who did."

Her voice is steady. She looks me directly in the face. "Should I be ashamed that I'm not a hero? Well, I'm not ashamed." The voice remains low and even. The statement betrays neither defiance nor defensiveness.

Again and again the exchange between Andrea and Galileo in Brecht's *Galileo* runs through my head. "Pity the land that has no heroes," says Andrea, a pupil of Galileo. "Pity the land that *needs* heroes," Brecht's marxified Galileo corrects him.

Which is it, really?

Frau Hintze continues, "Although I now judge all the lying and deception to have been wrong, I just wasn't strong enough to pursue the truth. In hindsight, I couldn't have done things much differently. I wish that I had developed a mode of critical thinking, but I hadn't."

Only now is she beginning to think "critically" about the Communist dogmas of the GDR era, she says. She is confronting the overwhelming task of coping with the past. "But I *am* ashamed in another sense—not of myself, but rather of the nation that I lived in, a nation that effectively dictated that the only truly decent human beings were those with the courage to be heroes. It was a nation that, by cutting us off from the truth, made cowards of us all."

As Frau Hintze escorts me to the bus stop, we talk of her career in the Schiller school. She mentions the names of some of the pupils that I met during my last visit—a few of whom are now teachers in the school themselves.

Waiting for the bus, I look at the faces of the playing children as they scamper by me. The old Party slogan of the GDR youth organizations comes to mind: "Who has the Youth, has the Future."

Do they—do we—need heroes?

Perhaps it is my own weaknesses—or only the relative immaturity of the Andrea in me—but I conclude that we all still do. It would be soothing and self-satisfying to think that we do not. But the assumption of Galileo—and Brecht—that a special few heroes exclude the possibility of heroism for the rest of us, that public heroism elevates those special few at the expense of the vast majority—may be misconceived.

Maybe indeed just the reverse is the case. Heroes might show us what we're *all* capable of. They might blaze a trail for the rest of us to follow, in whatever way, and help us become heroes in our own right—men and women with the courage to speak truth to power.

JOHN RODDEN *is Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Texas at Austin and author of* The Politics of Literary Reputation *(Oxford University Press).*

Swearing to Life

Joseph R. Stanton, E. Joanne Angelo, and Marianne Rea-Luthin

In 1972, deep in the library of the Mayo Clinic, Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun found an essay, written by the classicist Ludwig Edelstein in 1943, that described the Hippocratic Oath as "a Pythagorean manifesto and not an absolute standard of medical conduct." With this ammunition, Justice Blackmun was able, in his *Roe v. Wade* decision, to explain away as a meaningless historical accident the medical profession's traditional prohibition against doctors performing abortions: "This it seems to us is a satisfactory explanation of the Hippocratic Oath's apparent rigidity. It enables us to understand in historical context a long accepted and revered statement of medical ethics."

Hippocrates (460-377 B.C.), a Greek physician on the Isle of Cos, was called even in ancient times the "Father of Medicine." Modern classicists have long argued back and forth about the authorship of his Oath and the other writings in the Hippocratic corpus. But, regardless of its actual author, classicists all acknowledge that the Hippocratic Oath dates back at least to the fourth century B.C. and marks the moment when—thanks to Hippocrates' influence on his many students and apprentices—medicine separated itself from magic and pledged itself to preserving life. "I will give no one a deadly medicine, nor counsel any such thing," the Oath declares; "I will not give a woman a pessary to induce abortion." The anthropologist Margaret Mead observed, "Throughout the primitive world, the doctor and the sorcerer tended to be the same person. . . . With the Greeks the distinction was made clear. One profession . . . [was] to be dedicated completely to life under all circumstances, regardless of rank, age, or intellect—the life of a slave, the life of the Emperor, the life of a foreign man, the life of a defective child."

The Hippocratic Oath, administered in its modern translations to nearly all medical school graduates since the ancient Greeks, has virtually disappeared from medicine in the late twentieth century. After the Russian Revolution, the Soviet government replaced the Oath with a mandatory pledge "to conduct all my actions according to the principles of Communist morality." The shocking disclosures at the Nuremberg trials of Nazi doctors for "crimes against humanity" brought a temporary reversion. The 1949 *Medical Declaration of Geneva* added to the Hippocratic Oath the explicit line, "I will maintain the utmost respect for human life from the time of its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conception." At almost the same time, protocols were established at a conference in Helsinki for assuring informed consent regarding medication and non-therapeutic experimentation.

But the decline and modification of the Oath continued, and when the Supreme Court asserted the right to doctor-performed abortion in 1973, the members of the medical profession by and large refused to declare abortion a violation of the ethical ideal asserted in the Hippocratic Oath they had all taken. With the widespread notion that the Supreme Court had settled for doctors the issue of abortion, fewer and fewer medical schools administered either the Oath or its occasional substitute, the Prayer of Maimonides. By 1977, only 6 percent of American medical schools offered the unmodified oath.

As the evil wrought by abortion and its logical corollary of euthanasia becomes ever more apparent, there are some hopeful signs of ethical resurgence. With the collapse of communism, the Russian government has rejected the Soviet Oath and demanded from its doctors a pledge "to revise the moral foundations of Russian physicians" and promote "the restoration of the priority of universal moral principles." The physician who heads the ethics section of the British Medical Association has recently called for restoration of the ancient Hippocratic Oath.

Little agreement has been reached, however, about what such an oath would entail. At least twenty-five proposed substitutes have been published in the United States, none of which have managed either to be faithful to the original Oath or to find wide acceptance. One proposed oath, by Dr. Louis Weinstein, somehow asserts that "I shall always have the highest respect for human life" and yet also that the termination of life in certain, unspecified circumstances can be "an act of charity." The oath proposed by Dr. Louis Lasagna, Dean of Tufts University Medical School, proclaims, "If it is given to me to save a life, all thanks. But it may also be within my power to take a life."

Reflecting on the disordered state of medical oaths in the era of abortion, the Value of Life Committee in early 1995 sent a letter of inquiry to a group of prominent scholars and physicians, including distinguished authors of texts on medical ethics. Collating the suggestions received and presenting them as far as possible in the language of the original Oath (360 words in the original; 410 in the restatement), the Committee arrived at a consensus, publishing its proposed "1995 Restatement of the Oath of Hippocrates" in April 1995. [See opposite page—*Eds.*] To date more than five thousand copies have been distributed to medical ethicists, practicing physicians, and medical students.

Almost at the same time as the "Restatement" was published, Pope John Paul II issued the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, which summons health care professionals "to be guardians and servants of life, . . . something already recognized by the still relevant Hippocratic Oath." The widest possible adoption of a medical oath that recognizes the sacredness of human life—and recognizes the necessity to preserve doctors from becoming society's paid killers—stands as one of the best and surest ways the medical profession can combat the culture of death.

JOSEPH R. STANTON, M.D., *one of the founding members of the pro-life movement in the United States, is a retired physician living in Needham, Mass.* E. JOANNE ANGELO, M.D., *is a practicing psychiatrist, an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, Mass., and a member of Women Affirming Life, a Catholic pro-life organization.* MARIANNE REA-LUTHIN, M.Ed., *is President of the Value of Life Committee in Brighton, Mass., and is also a member of Women Affirming Life. Framable copies of the Oath are available upon request from the Value of Life Committee, Inc., P.O. Box 35279, Brighton, Mass. 02135.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A.D. 1995 Restatement of the Oath of Hippocrates

I SWEAR in the presence of the Almighty and before my family, my teachers, and my peers that according to my ability and judgment I will keep this Oath and Stipulation:

TO RECKON all who have taught me this art equally dear to me as my parents and in the same spirit and dedication to impart a knowledge of the art of medicine to others. I will continue with diligence to keep abreast of advances in medicine. I will treat without exception all who seek my ministrations, so long as the treatment of others is not compromised thereby, and I will seek the counsel of particularly skilled physicians where indicated for the benefit of my patient.

I WILL FOLLOW that method of treatment which according to my ability and judgment I consider for the benefit of my patient and abstain from whatever is harmful or mischievous. I will neither prescribe nor administer a lethal dose of medicine to any patient even if asked nor counsel any such thing nor perform act or omission with direct intent deliberately to end a human life. I will maintain the utmost respect for every human life from fertilization to natural death and reject abortion that deliberately takes a unique human life.

WITH PURITY, HOLINESS, AND BENEFICENCE I will pass my life and practice my art. Except for the prudent correction of an imminent danger, I will neither treat any patient nor carry out any research on any human being without the valid informed consent of the subject or the appropriate legal protector thereof, understanding that research must have as its purpose the furtherance of the health of that individual. Into whatever patient setting I enter, I will go for the benefit of the sick and will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief or corruption and further from the seduction of any patient.

WHATEVER IN CONNECTION with my professional practice or not in connection with it I may see or hear in the lives of my patients which ought not be spoken abroad I will not divulge, reckoning that all such should be kept secret.

WHILE I CONTINUE to keep this Oath unviolated may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of the art and science of medicine with the blessing of the Almighty and respected by my peers and society, but should I trespass and violate this Oath, may the reverse be my lot.

E. Joanne Angelo, M.D.
Boston, Mass.

Henry G. Armitage, M.D., F.A.C.S.
North Andover, Mass.

Anne E. Bannon, M.D.
St. Louis, Missouri

Prof. Rabbi J. David Bleich, Ph.D.
Cardozo Law School
New York, N.Y.

Prof. Harold O.J. Brown, Ph.D.
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois

Matthew Bulfin, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
Lauderdale by the Sea, Florida

Paul A. Byrne, M.D.
Sylvania, Ohio

William Colliton, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
Washington, D.C.

Prof. John Jefferson Davis, Ph.D.
Gordon-Conwell Seminary
South Hamilton, Mass.

Prof. Patrick Derr, Ph.D.
Clark University
Worcester, Mass.

Eugene Diamond, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Chicago, Illinois

Mark Druffner, M.D.
Minneapolis, Minn.

Prof. Arthur J. Dyck
Cambridge, Mass.

Richard Fenigsen, M.D.
Cambridge, Mass.

Albert E. Gunn, M.D.
Houston, Texas

Curt Harris, M.D., J.D.
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Gloria V. Heffernan, M.D.
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Helen Jackson, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
Boston, Mass.

Prof. C. Ward Kischer, Ph.D.
Tucson, Arizona

C. Everett Koop, M.D.
Bethesda, Maryland

Micheline Mathews-Roth, M.D.
Boston, Mass.

Prof. William May, Ph.D.
John Paul II Institute
Washington, D.C.

Assoc. Prof. Ralph Miech, M.D., Ph.D.
Providence, R.I.

Gertrude H. Murphy, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Weymouth, Mass.

Prof. J. Robert Nelson
Houston, Texas

Samuel Nigro, M.D.
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Robert Nixon, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Pittsboro, N.C.

Prof. Edmund Pellegrino, M.D.
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C.

Francis Rockett, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Newton, Mass.

Msgr. William Smith, S.T.D.
Dunwoodie, N.Y.

Joseph R. Stanton, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Needham, Mass.

Leonie S. Watson, M.D.
Evans, Georgia

Richard A. Watson, M.D.
Evans, Georgia

John J. C. Wilke, M.D.
Cincinnati, Ohio

Prof. George H. Williams
Cambridge, Mass.

Institutional designations for identification purposes only. Copyright Value of Life Committee, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ON THE OTHER HAND

Berlin Again and Again

Peter L. Berger

One of the (regrettably few) benefits of growing old is the way in which incidents in one's own biography intersect with phases of what passes for world history.

I have visited Berlin several times, but three visits stick out in recollection. The first was in the late 1950s after the Airlift but before the Wall; the second was in the mid-1980s; the third was in the summer of 1995. A different vision of Berlin emerged at each visit: frontier of freedom; repository of all the moral pathologies of the West; pressure cooker of the new Germany. Over each loomed the Brandenburg Gate, potent symbol of the pretensions and the futility of all human attempts to shape the flow of events.

I have never liked Berlin—after all, I'm Viennese. It is too big, too brash, and too intimately connected with the worst nightmares of this century. But on my first visit I was impressed with the plucky spirit of the Western part of the city, which in a few short years had passed from being the capital of the Nazi tyranny to being an outpost in the defense of freedom. It is not irrelevant that the Berliners were never particularly enamored of the Nazi regime. (Proportionally, there may well have been more Nazis in Vienna than in Berlin.) Hitler detested his own capital, and the Gestapo was much concerned over the political attitudes of its population. Many Berliners in turn looked on Nazism as a Bavarian disease that had engulfed their city. Still, this was the capital of the Third Reich, and for millions of its oppressed subjects the Brandenburg Gate loomed as a symbol of that oppression.

By the late 1950s it required an effort to visualize that earlier period, as indeed it did in other places in West Germany. On the surface, at any rate, the reminders of the Nazi era had been swept away (they came back somewhat later to haunt the German consciousness, but that is another story). The Brandenburg Gate now loomed on the border of a new and much more proximate tyranny. Berliners were the "Good Germans" doing their part in the defense of democracy.

I crossed over to East Berlin several times on my first visit, nervously clutching my then quite new American passport (citizens of the Western Allied nations were free to circulate in all parts of the city). At that time, before the Wall, one could take the U-Bahn, the Berlin subway, across the dividing line. The train always stopped for a long time before crossing. A loudspeaker announced repeatedly that we were now leaving the American Sector. All Western newspapers had disappeared before then. Where before there had been animated conversation, the train now became very silent. When it moved again, unsmiling officers of the Volkspolizei walked through, occasionally asking a passenger to produce identification papers. Communist propaganda slogans festooned the walls of the subway stations. One was conscious every moment that one had now passed into a very different world.

There was much more wartime destruction still visible in East Berlin than in the West. The city was shabbier, more dilapidated. Out of the general shabbiness rose the brand-new constructions of socialist architecture, notably the atrociously ugly buildings of the Stalin Allee and the government headquarters of the German Democratic Republic. Soviet officers in shining uniforms strutted around the streets, very much the imperial conquerors. There was no advertising, only banners and billboards bearing political messages. Conversations with strangers were brief and cautious. Even in crowded places there was much silence.

Upon returning to West Berlin there was always a palpable sense of relief. In the most literal sense, one was once again breathing the atmosphere of freedom. The noisy crowds on the Kurfuerstendamm, the flashy advertising, even the raunchy nightlife of West Berlin were part and parcel of this atmosphere. The sarcastic humor for which Berlin had always been known, its brashness and irreverence, went well with this frontier status. I vividly recall attending a cabaret and laughing helplessly as the comedians satirized Communist cant with surgical precision. Sometimes I had difficulties following the local references, not to mention the Berlin dialect, but my Viennese prejudices dissolved in a sentiment of democratic solidarity.

After the Wall went up, the West German government did everything it could to build up West Berlin as a showcase of democracy and prosperity. Part of the effort consisted of subsidizing all sorts of cultural and intellectual institutions. The city hosted a multitude of institutes, research centers, and other breeding grounds of the New Class. Ironically, the Free University, founded by courageous students who seceded from the Communist-dominated Humboldt University in the East, became a bastion of every kind of Marxist, neo-Marxist, and quasi-Marxist ideology. Because of the four-power agreement on the status of Berlin, young men residing in West Berlin were not subject to the military draft in the Federal Republic. Since anyone could freely move there from the West, the city became a haven for young men seeking to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

avoid the draft, many of them for political reasons. As a result of all this, West Berlin became a repository for every ideological inanity of the post-1960s West. It was still possible to have a sane conversation with the odd taxi driver or Turkish hotel employee, but as soon as one moved into academic circles one was engulfed in an atmosphere of pervasive spiritual lunacy.

During my visit in the 1980s, I went to both a museum that had been set up near Checkpoint Charlie and a West Berlin cabaret. The museum showed various stages in the history of the Wall, commemorating famous escapes—through tunnels, hidden compartments in automobiles, and even a balloon. One block from the museum was the Wall itself, that obscene brutality cutting through the living fabric of the city. Flowers marked the spot where a would-be escapee had been shot to death by the Communist border guards. One could look at the guards standing on top of a watch tower on the other side, just feet away. They looked back with binoculars. One was very conscious of standing on the edge of a gigantic and ominously threatening empire that stretched from here to the outermost ends of Asia.

Things were very different that evening at the cabaret, a crowded, dimly lit place, filled with middle-aged hippies, men with unkempt beards and women wearing Peruvian ponchos. Unlike my cabaret experience in the 1950s, in the satire of the 1980s there was not a single reference to the Communist East only a ten-minute walk away. Every barb was directed at the Federal Republic and its society. The comics' portrait was one of unmitigated evil—a society marked by neo-fascism, American imperialism, phallocracy, homophobia, and environmental destruction. It was as if the Wall did not exist.

Berlin in 1995 is yet another world. Straddling the old border is what must easily be the largest construction site in the world. An entire new government quarter is going up around the old Reichstag (recently wrapped and unwrapped in the Christos' postmodernist mega-joke), but also hotels, office blocks, apartment buildings, and the new European headquarters of Sony. East Berlin, or at any rate much of it, is booming. Everywhere are the paraphernalia of reconstruction and renovation. A decade or so from now this will be one of the most monumental capitals of Europe (a dubious international asset for Germany, I would think). The old Stalinist-style buildings stand empty, awaiting demolition and revamping. Here and there, in Berlin Mitte, one comes on a few places still intact from the remoter past—Prussian, sober, Protestant—as around the Opera and the Cathedral. But on the whole it is as if the Kurfuerstendamm had exploded to incorporate the entire city with its showy prosperity and neo-European with-it-ness.

For all I know there are still people muttering Marxist incantations in obscure corners of the Free University, but they no longer determine the atmosphere of the city. In East Berlin (though less so than in other parts of ex-Communist Germany) one can still hear expressions of resentment against the dominance of the "Wessis." As in this typically "Ossi" joke: "Why are the Chinese always smiling? Because they still have *their* wall." An imaginative entrepreneur has actually put up a theme park, where visitors can experience daily life in the German Democratic Republic (including encounters with grim officers of the Volkspolizei). By all accounts, this nostalgia is waning. Reunification is becoming a success story. Soon it will be as difficult to imagine the scenes of the Communist era as it had been, in the 1950s, to visualize the Nazis. A new, powerful Germany is taking shape here. It is a vast improvement over everything that preceded it in this century. Yet, somehow, one contemplates it with less than undivided joy.

Soon after the collapse of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, Soviet soldiers were selling bits and pieces of their uniforms for the benefit of Western tourists. Right at the Brandenburg Gate, there is still a set of stalls selling this stuff, manned by rather wild-looking men speaking an esoteric language. When asked, one answered, improbably, that he was Pakistani. The men look as if they came from the Caucasus region, perhaps Azerbaijan, or Chechen. One can buy caps and insignia of the Soviet Army and the East German Volksarmee, Communist banners and party pins, postage stamps and currency of the German Democratic Republic. There are few takers.

PETER L. BERGER *is Director of the Center for the Study of Economic Culture at Boston University.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Christian University: A Call to Counterrevolution

Gertrude Himmelfarb

It is well to remember, as we contemplate the relation of the university and church, that the Protestant Reformation was started by a professor in a university. Years later Luther insisted that he had never meant to be a reformer.

> I was forced and driven into this position in the first place when I had to become a Doctor of Holy Scripture against my will. Then, as a doctor in a general free university, I began, at the command of pope and emperor, to do what such a doctor is sworn to do, expounding the Scriptures for all the world and teaching everybody.

Like Luther, some of the professors in our own universities protest that they have been forced, against their will, into the role of reformers. Willingly or not, however—and more often, I suspect, willingly than not—these professors are presiding over a reformation that is as momentous for the university as Luther's was for the church.

The reformation we are now witnessing is not the first the American university has gone through; nor, I daresay, will it be the last. The first, like Luther's reformation, involved the disestablishment of the church. Until this century, most private universities were affiliated with a church; in colonial and pre-Civil War days, some were barely distinguishable from seminaries. Gradually, almost all of them (with some notable exceptions) have been either officially disestablished or virtually so, leaving little more than a nominal relationship to a passive church.

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB, *a member of the Editorial Board of* FIRST THINGS, *is author most recently of* The De-moralization of Society *(Knopf).* *This essay and the one following by Richard John Neuhaus were originally presented last September on the occasion of the installation of Robert Bryan Sloan, Jr. as President of Baylor University.*

It is generally thought that this disestablishment was a product of what has been called the "warfare of science and religion" precipitated by Darwinism. In fact, that "warfare" has been much exaggerated. The secularization of the university reflected a secularization of the culture going back at least to the Enlightenment and having more to do with the philosophy of rationalism than with science or any specific scientific theory such as Darwinism.

Indeed, it was the idea of "culture"—a secular, rational, cosmopolitan, liberal (in the nonpolitical sense of that word) culture—far more than the idea of "science," that lay behind the secularization of the university in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. There were even educators and intellectuals—"humanists," they proudly called themselves—who thought that science (or too heavy a dose of science) was as inimical to a liberal education as was religion (or too sectarian a religion). Matthew Arnold's famous definition of culture, "the best which has been thought and said in the world," was endorsed by Irving Babbitt, Charles Eliot Norton, and other luminaries of American intellectual life.

The displacement of religion—not by science but by culture—occurred gradually but firmly. In 1881 the president of Williams College took the occasion of his inaugural address to attack the "infidel doctrine" that held culture to be more important than religious piety. Five years later, in another address, he reversed himself: The "union of culture and power," he said, is the mark of the educated man, and the duty of teachers is to inspire their students "to love the best thoughts of the best authors." The president of the University of Wisconsin echoed another of Matthew Arnold's sentiments when he announced, "Religion is not so much the foundation of morals, as morals the foundation of religion."

Some of these humanists were unbelievers, but they were not (except perhaps for Babbitt) aggressive-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly antireligious. At the annual meeting of the Religious Education Association in 1904, two professors from Yale and Brown recommended that the Bible be taught at the university as a literary document rather than as a book of revelation. It is interesting that they were content to have the Bible taught, if only as literature, just as they were willing to retain compulsory chapel, for purposes of morals if not of faith.

By the turn of the century, this reformation was well under way, with some of the country's major universities transformed into essentially secular institutions. Some smaller colleges and a few large universities retained a more active religious affiliation and a more religiously oriented curriculum. But eventually most of these—again, with a few notable exceptions, Baylor University being one of them—succumbed to the spirit of the times. In part this reflects not only the secularization of society but also the secularization of the mainline churches, which made them willing accomplices in the transformation of the universities.

That was the first reformation in the university: the disestablishment of the church. The second was the establishment, so to speak, of society in lieu of the church. If churches have abdicated responsibility over the university, society has asserted itself in ways that an earlier generation of secular humanists could not have foreseen—and would probably not have welcomed.

The university has always had important social functions. In the most practical sense, it has fed its graduates into the professions—law, diplomacy, clerisy, the civil service. More important, it has served as a socializing, civilizing, even moralizing agent for the students who passed through it (and perhaps as well for the professors ensconced in it). It has also been an instrument for social mobility and advancement; for those lacking the privileges of birth and money, a degree and a diploma could be passports to rank and fortune. But it has done all this indirectly, as a happy by-product of its essential functions: the creation, preservation, and transmission of knowledge.

After World War II, with the vast increase in the student population and the infusion of large sums of government money, the university acquired new functions, among them the solving of society's problems: poverty, pollution, urban unrest, crime, and whatever other subject might occur to a resourceful professor seeking a government grant. In place of a *liberal* education—an education in "the best which has been thought and said"—the university was now pleased to provide a *relevant* education, an education in what society deemed to be useful and needful.

Having committed itself to solving society's problems, the university could hardly ignore the problems of its own students. Thus the university also became a therapeutic institution, coping with the feelings, desires, and egos—and the recurring "identity crises"—of the students. During the student uprisings of the 1960s, this therapeutic mission had as its corollary the "empowerment" of students, their admission to curriculum, governance, even appointment and tenure committees. At the same time, the faculty itself was "empowered," assuming the right to express opinions on all subjects, within or without their discipline, and in or outside the classroom. Thus the socially conscious university inevitably became a highly politicized one.

It was also inevitable that a university eager to redress the ills of society would be called on to reflect the composition of society—its racial, ethnic, and sexual population. This is the meaning of affirmative action and multiculturalism, which have loomed so large in the university in recent years. The original intention was to open up the university to minority or so-called "marginalized" groups, to make both the student body and the faculty more inclusive and representative of society at large. But it was not long before this idea of inclusiveness or representativeness was extended to the curriculum, requiring the courses themselves, the very content of education, to reflect the interests and identities of these minorities.

Today, race, class, and gender are the holy trinity presiding over higher education in America. Although that is the familiar mantra—race, class, gender—it is not the actual order of priority. Class, which was once the reigning principle of a Marxist-dominated curriculum, has been relegated to third place, with gender occupying the first place. Few people have even noticed (I've never seen any mention of the fact) that religion is missing from this trinity, as if it is no longer a defining principle of one's identity.

This new identity-centered education is evident not only in departments and courses of women's studies, black studies, ethnic studies, gay and lesbian studies, but in the more traditional disciplines as well—literature, history, philosophy, theology, anthropology, sociology. There is even an attempt to "engender" the sciences. An article by one mathematician, entitled "Toward a Feminist Algebra," protests against the sexist nature of traditional algebra; and a book on feminist science declares Newton's *Principia* to be so suffused with "gender symbolism, gender structure, and gender identity" as to be nothing less than a "rape manual."

The university was once derided as an "ivory tower." Today no one would characterize it that way, whether in praise or abuse. It is very much of this world—all too much of this world, some might say, as professors (in the classroom as without) openly declare themselves advocates of this or that cause, group, or ideology.

But a far more momentous reformation has recently taken place—more important, in my opinion,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than either the secularization or the politicization of the university. This is the intellectual reformation of the university—which may more aptly be called a revolution than a reformation. A quarter of a century ago, the sociologist Robert Nisbet wrote a book with the memorable title, *The Degradation of the Academic Dogma.* To readers fresh from the dramatic events of the sixties—the student uprisings at Berkeley and other universities—Nisbet reminded them of the "dogma," as he called it, that had sustained the university for centuries: the "faith" (again, this was his word) in reason and knowledge, in the rational, dispassionate search for truth, and in the dissemination of knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

The objects of knowledge, to be sure, had changed in the course of time. The classical curriculum had given way to the modern one, with the addition first of history, literature, and modern languages, then of the sciences and social sciences, finally of professional and vocational subjects. But throughout the centuries, the essential dogma—the commitment to truth, knowledge, and objectivity—remained intact.

It was the abandonment of that dogma, Nisbet said, that ushered in a "reformation" (again, his word; the religious motif is consistent) of the university—a reformation, as his title suggests, that was utterly disastrous for the university.

Since that book was written, the academic dogma has been further degraded in ways Nisbet could not have foreseen. Not, I hasten to add, in all universities to the same extent, nor in all departments of all universities, nor for all members of all universities—but certainly in academia as a whole, and most of all in the most prestigious institutions of academia.

Today many eminent professors in some of our most esteemed universities disparage the ideas of truth, knowledge, and objectivity as naive or disingenuous at best, as fraudulent and despotic at worst. Indeed, the very words—truth, knowledge, objectivity—now habitually appear, in scholarly journals and books, in quotation marks, to show how spurious they are. Above all it is truth that is denigrated. This is obviously a by-product of the politicization of the university, but it has received credibility and respectability from the most influential intellectual movement to sweep the university in recent years: postmodernism.

This is not to say that all professors, or even most professors, have become postmodernists. A great many of them remain traditionalist, committed to the old academic dogma. But they find themselves in a defensive position. By now the spirit of postmodernism has pervaded the academy to the point where most younger professors, and a good many older ones, are accepting its basic assumptions and tenets almost unthinkingly.

The animating spirit of postmodernism is a radical relativism and skepticism that rejects any idea of truth, knowledge, or objectivity. More important, it refuses even to aspire to such ideas, on the ground that they are not only unattainable but undesirable—that they are, by their very nature, authoritarian and repressive.

This is very different from the relativism and skepticism that scholars have traditionally brought to their trade. Historians, for example, have always had a healthy dose of both. They have been acutely aware of the limitations of their discipline: the deficiency of the historical records, the selectivity inherent in the writing of history, the fallibility and subjectivity of the historian, and thus the imperfect, tentative, and partial (in both senses of the word) nature of every historical work. But historians have always made the most strenuous efforts to curb and control these deficiencies, to try to be as objective as possible, to strive for accuracy, veracity, and impartiality.

This is what is meant—or used to be meant—by the "discipline" of history, and why the keystone of every graduate program until recently has been a required course on "methodology," instructing students in the proper use of sources, the need for substantiating and countervailing evidence, the conventions of documentation and citation. Such courses are very nearly obsolete today.

Today the very idea of a "discipline" of history, or of any academic discipline, is widely derided, just as are the ideas of truth, knowledge, and objectivity. (And facts as well; this is another word that now appears in quotation marks. One reputable historian complains of the "fetishism of facts," while others disparage factuality as "facticity.") These ideas—truth, knowledge, objectivity—are said to be nothing more than "social constructs," inventions of the "hegemonic" or ruling class. There is no truth, the argument goes, to be derived from history—not even partial, incremental, contingent truth. There is no objectivity—not even an approximation of it, nor any reason to seek it. There are not even any events in history—only "texts" to be interpreted in accord with the historian's interest and disposition.

It is in this spirit that much of academic study has been relativized, subjectified, "problematized" (as the postmodernist says), and politicized. If there is no truth, no facts, no objectivity, there is only will and power. "Everything is political," the popular slogan has it.

A year after Nisbet wrote of the "degradation of the academic dogma," the distinguished literary critic Lionel Trilling described the denigration of mind that he sensed in the culture in general and in the university in particular. He deplored the tendency to "impugn and devalue the very concept of mind," indeed to deny the "authority of mind," and thus to reject the "intellectual ideal of objectivity." That ideal, Trilling granted, can never be fully realized, but it has always to be strived for. "In the face of the certainty," he wrote, "that the effort of objectivity

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will fall short of what it aims at, those who undertake to make the effort do so out of something like a sense of intellectual honor and out of the faith that in the practical life, which includes the moral life, some good must follow from even the relative success of the endeavor."

"Intellectual honor," "moral life"—these expressions do not come trippingly to the tongue today. Yet these words and the ideas they signify—truth, knowledge, and objectivity—are the only guarantees of the intellectual and moral integrity of the university. For without them as the guiding principles of learning and teaching, research and scholarship, there can be no standards of merit or excellence, no controls against willful ignorance and deception. "Nothing is true; everything is permitted"—that was Nietzsche's definition of freedom. For the university, that freedom, the freedom from truth, is a prescription for intellectual and moral nihilism.

At this point we may take stock of the successive reformations or revolutions that have transformed the university. For we are now confronted with a university (again, I am speaking of the dominant mode of university in America) that has almost totally abandoned its original mission. It is now not merely a secular institution but a secularist one, propagating secularism as a creed, a creed that is not neutral as among religions but is hostile to all religions, indeed to religion itself. It is also a highly politicized institution; no longer subject to any religious authority, the university is at the mercy of the whims and wills of interest groups and ideologies. Finally, and most disastrously, the university, liberated from religious dogma, has also become liberated from the traditional academic dogma, the belief in truth, knowledge, and objectivity.

It is in this situation, in this postmodern world, that an institution like Baylor University takes on a new meaning and, I would suggest, a new mission. For it now has not only a religious tradition to uphold but an intellectual one as well: the mission to restore and revitalize the traditional academic dogma. This means reaffirming the faith in truth, knowlege, and objectivity, pursuing these ideals knowing they are ideals that can never be fully realized, and above all, resisting the appeal of a fashionable and profoundly subversive philosophy that is not merely relativistic in the familiar sense but that celebrates an absolute relativism.

This is a worthy intellectual mission—and a moral one as well. Nietzsche understood this better than anyone. Determined to destroy morality, he knew that he would also have to destroy truth, for so long as men believed in truth, he said, they believed in God, and if in God, then in morality. In this sense, a religious university is faithful both to its religious and its moral mission when it affirms the traditional academic dogma, the belief in truth.

There is yet another aspect of morality, the morality of practical life, that is at stake here. Here too a university like Baylor, respectful of religion and of the moral virtues derived from religion, can serve as a powerful corrective to the secular university, which has superimposed upon the counterculture of the sixties the still more relativistic, permissive, and amoral postmodernist culture of the nineties.

In very recent years, there has been a revulsion in society at large—although not yet in the academy—against this culture. It is a propitious time, therefore, for a university like Baylor, which has kept faith with its religious and ethical heritage, to contemplate a counterrevolution that will restore the original academic dogma and make the university once again a repository of intellectual and moral virtue. FT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Christian University: Eleven Theses

Richard John Neuhaus

I am honored to join in the prayer and reflection marking the inauguration of a new president of this great institution. I invite your consideration of eleven theses on the possibility of a Christian university. You will no doubt be grateful that there are not ninety-five theses.

I. There is no such thing as a university pure and simple. It is therefore misleading to say that a Christian university has a "dual identity," one by virtue of being a university and another by virtue of being Christian. The suggestion that the term "university" is neutral or self-explanatory is unwarranted and without historical foundation. In the Western tradition, from the Middle Ages until this century, from Bologna and Oxford to Yale and Princeton, the university was explicitly constituted and typically inspired by Christian truth. Going back farther, the word "academy" was originally the name of the precinct in Athens where Plato established his school, and he clearly affirmed that freedom for the truth cannot be separated from worship of the divine. At Harvard one can still see the original seal with the word "Veritas" surrounded by "Pro Christo et Ecclesia"—for Christ and the church. In the last century that legend was reduced to just the one word, "Veritas," and at Harvard there is obviously no consensus on what that truth might be or even on whether there is such a thing as truth. By changing its seal and the conviction it reflected, Harvard did not become more of a university; it became a different kind of university. A secular university is not a university pure and simple; it is a secular university. Secular is not a synonym for neutral. Not to say that Jesus is Lord is not to say nothing. Not to say that Jesus is Lord is to say that saying Jesus is Lord is unnecessary to, or a hindrance to, being the kind of university you want to be. A Christian university does not have a dual identity but a clear identity—a clear identity based upon a definite understanding of the kind of university it intends to be. There is no such thing as a university pure and simple.

II. Church affiliation does not make a university Christian. At a conference recently, the president of a major university said that he could sometimes describe his university as Methodist but he could never get away with calling it Christian. The distinction is between institutional connection and substantive commitment. Affiliation is frequently something vestigial, speaking of the past rather than the future, of what a school was rather than what it hopes to be. Of course, a university can be both Baptist and Christian, but it can present itself as Baptist merely by pointing to its governing documents, while to present itself believably as Christian requires reference to its governing *convictions.*

III. While conviction is more important than affiliation, affiliation can help sustain conviction. Convictions are sustained by communities of conviction. The community of Christian conviction is the church, however variously expressed. All institutions are prone to losing their way, and therefore must be held accountable to a community that can recall them to their constituting purpose. Effective accountability necessarily involves matters such as hiring, promotions, and curriculum. As Dr. Johnson might observe, nothing so wonderfully concentrates the mind of a dean or department chair as the prospect of a budget cut in a fortnight. The community of conviction may be variously structured, but in the absence of accountability to such a body, the Christian university will almost certainly succumb to the institutional and ideological dynamics of other kinds of universities that falsely claim to be universities pure and simple.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS *is Editor-in-Chief of* FIRST THINGS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IV. A Christian university is not a church, but is part of the church's mission. A church has many tasks, including worship, evangelizing, catechesis, and works of mercy. All these tasks may be pursued within a university, but the university's specific task is discovering and transmitting the truth and cultivating the life of the mind. If the life of the mind is not understood as an integral part of Christian discipleship and mission, the term "Christian university" is indeed, as some claim, an oxymoron. While a Christian university is not a church, it is from the church and serves the church by enabling the church to serve the world more fully. That is the argument of the 1990 apostolic constitution on Catholic universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. The Catholic university is born from the heart of the church and borne by the mission of the church. A university that is not integral to the Christian mission will in time become alien to the Christian mission.

V. The faculty determines the character of the university. *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* says a majority of the faculty must be Catholic, but that hardly seems sufficient. It is more important that all the faculty respect, or at least not actively oppose, the idea of a Christian university. The institution-defining decisions must be made by those who understand and support the institution's purpose. Discrimination is necessary in hiring and promotion—not necessarily discrimination on the basis of religious belief but discrimination on the basis of belief in the great good of being a Christian university. The university is better served by an agnostic who wants the university to be Christian than by a devout believer who does not.

VI. Freedom, including academic freedom, is necessarily related to truth. "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free." Freedom that is not grounded in truth is built on the shifting sands of fashionable opinion and brute power. Contrary to Pontius Pilate and many thinkers of our time, the question, "What is truth?" does not preclude truth claims but is an invitation to a lifelong adventure of inquiry, dialogue, and understanding. Truth, if it is really truth, can never be the enemy of the search for truth. When academic freedom is untethered from truth, it is no longer possible to make a reasonable (truthful) argument for academic freedom.

VII. A Christian university serves the great good of pluralism. It does not mirror the false pluralism of a culture that pretends that the deepest differences make no difference, but, within the bond of civility, engages the differences that make the most difference. The greatest contribution to pluralism in higher education is to be a different kind of university. Within the university, differences, including religious differences, are engaged in the confidence that all that is truly true is ultimately one. This is particularly true of the engagement with Judaism, without which Christianity is less than whole. Authentic pluralism does not compromise but is made imperative by the Christian character of the university.

VIII. In a Christian university there is no "role" for religion. Rather, it is within religion—more accurately, it is within the Christian understanding of reality—that everything finds its role. In that understanding, nothing that is true or good or beautiful can be excluded. A Christian university is a humanistic university, for nothing that is authentically human is alien to the truth of God in Christ. The work of a Christian university in service to the fullness of truth is to anticipate the promise described by St. Paul in Ephesians 1 as God's "plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

IX. A Christian university rejects the dichotomies that pit truth against truth. There is an unrecognized alliance between anti-intellectuals outside the university (often called fundamentalists) and intellectuals within the university, both of whom propose a dichotomy, even an antithesis, between faith and reason, heart and mind, facts and values, belief and knowledge, devotion and learning. A Christian university has as its premise the knowledge that all truth is one and all ways to truth are one because the Author and the End of truth is One.

X. A Christian university will settle for nothing less than a comprehensive account of reality. Not content with the *what* of things, it wrestles with the *why* of things; not content with knowing *how*, it asks *what for*. Unlike other kinds of universities, the Christian university cannot evade the hard questions about what it all means. Therefore theology and philosophy, the sciences of meaning, are at the heart of the Christian university.

XI. If Christian truth does not illumine and undergird every quest for truth, it is questionable that Christianity is true. The God who gave us reason and keeps faith with the orders of creation calls us to respect the integrity of every way of knowing. Not every way of knowing must bear the label "Christian"—as in Christian chemistry, or Christian musicology, or Christian linguistics. In the Christian university, the word Christian is not a limiting label but the starting point, the end point, and the guiding inspiration all along the way. The words of Psalm 36 express the guiding inspiration of the Christian university: "In your light we see light."

A word in conclusion. Today the Christian university is in crisis. There are no doubt many parts to the crisis. It is often described as a crisis of secularization. It is more accurately described as a crisis creat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ed by the ambition to imitate other kinds of universities that falsely claim to be universities pure and simple. It is most accurately described as a crisis of Christian faith. The question that those who lead a Christian university must answer, and answer again every day, is whether the confession that Jesus is Lord limits or illumines the university's obligation to seek and serve *Veritas*—to seek and serve the truth. FT

Subway

It is stuffed full with thick, shapeless coats,
this narrow closet
you've been banished to.

Feel your way through the royal
blue mothball-soaked car coat,
the scratchy tasselled poncho,
the soft, frayed jean jacket.

Push back the elegant
camel-hair overcoat,
the black leather jacket,
saddle-raw,
the yellow down parka,
hurry,
as if they were window curtains.

Stubbornly hook
a few inches of territory
on the dull metal pole.

Hang there.

Fence in your homestead.
Look straight ahead.
Stonewall the homesick wrench
you've learned to ignore,
the trapped unsung longing for God
that has become your despair.

Turn to face the glass.

Stare critically at the dismal reflections.

Must your miss everything?
The memories of displaced princes.
The secrets of princesses deposed.
Hearts dripping with the juice of apples.
Clouds of gold.

Bridget Ellen Muller

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Abortion Cocktail

Bernard N. Nathanson

In April 1970, in the pages of the *Obstetrical and Gynecological Review*, I reviewed the history of attempts to control population growth by means of medical—i.e., nonsurgical—abortion. Starting in antiquity, I found that the ancient Greeks did not generally approve of abortion, while their Roman counterparts favored the use of thaumaturgy and incantations. Cultures in Africa and the Middle East tried concoctions of camel or goat dung. In the medical lore of Europe during the Middle Ages, pastes, emetics, purgatives, emmenagogues, sternutators, convulsants, clysters, physical maneuvers, and pessaries are mentioned. The Enlightenment had a vast pharmacopeia with dazzling names and no abortifacient effect whatever: aloes, colocynth, apioline, pennyroyal, tansy, pulegium oil, caulophyllia, cardomon, and cimicifuge.

Toward the end of the paper I discussed a newly emerging class of drugs known as folic acid antagonists and antimetabolites. These drugs were used primarily to treat cancer but they were also reasonably effective in producing medical abortion, at least up to eight weeks gestation. The enormous toxicity of these drugs to the pregnant woman, however, and the fact that they produced massive congenital deformities in the fetuses who somehow survived the pharmacological assault, virtually precluded their use as abortifacients.

In 1995, twenty-five years after my review, the *New England Journal of Medicine* carried a report that the combination of a powerful anticancer agent (methotrexate) and a relatively innocuous drug used primarily to treat gastric ulcer (misoprostol) will effect medical abortion in 96 percent of women pregnant less than nine completed weeks, with no currently identifiable damage to the pregnant woman.

Some thoughtful analysts, including some pro-life advocates, have suggested that the legal battle to end abortion has at last ended in defeat with this report of an apparently effective and safe medical form of abortion. An "abortion cocktail" that women take in the privacy of their homes would eliminate the clearly specifiable abortionists against whom the pro-life movement has been able to focus its efforts. In the event of a ban on legal abortion, it would force prosecutors into the difficult position of seeking convictions against individual women rather than against the abortionists. Any attempt to pursue the doctors prescribing the "cocktail" would likely result merely in the emergence of a black market or of a charade in which women seeking abortions would report the symptoms of the diseases for which the ingredients are currently and legally prescribed.

The legal battle to ban abortion, however, is not by any means defeated with this report of a medical abortifacient, and it may in fact be helped. The unprofessional and unethical means by which the procedure was tested, the unknown long-term medical effects on women of the drugs involved, and the extreme dangers to the human gene pool posed by partially completed medical abortions all suggest a strong societal interest in banning the "abortion cocktail." And the falsity of claims that medical abortions will "demedicalize" and "empower" women by granting "at-home" abortions will soon become apparent—allowing the pro-life movement to continue to focus its efforts on the offices of abortionists.

Methotrexate, the first drug used in the "abortion cocktail," is an unusually potent and dangerous drug. The *Physician's Desk Reference* (*PDR*), an encyclopedic compendium of prescription drugs marketed in the U.S., devotes six pages to a description of the powers and hazards of this drug, its uses and abuses. (The average entry for drugs runs about one-half page.) The entry opens with a black-bordered box reading, in part: "Methotrexate should be

Bernard N. Nathanson, M.D., *the author of* Aborting America, *is a bioethicist at the Center for Research and Clinical Ethics ar Vanderbilt University.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

used only by physicians whose knowledge and experience includes the use of antimetabolite therapy. . . . Because of the possibility of serious toxic reactions the patient should be informed by the physician of the risks involved, and should be under a physician's constant supervision."

The *PDR* goes on to specify in excruciating detail the toxic potential of this drug: liver damage, kidney destruction, heart muscle compromise, pulmonary failure, gastrointestinal pathology, and bone marrow suppression. It has also been reported to cause loss of speech function, strokes, and convulsions. It is, in other words, one of the most toxic, dangerous, and potentially fatal drugs in the entire *PDR*, and it has been approved for use by the FDA only for the treatment of cancer—which is to say, the dangers of this drug are so massive that they are outweighed only by the benefit of abating or curing cancer.

There is a considerable literature concerning the use of methotrexate in ectopic, or tubal, pregnancies. In the past, ectopic pregnancy had been managed by surgical means, i.e., by removal of the tube containing the pregnancy. Moral theologians generally sanctioned this approach since, although it did effect abortion, the primary intention of the surgery was to preserve the life of the mother and the abortion was a regrettable side effect.

However, beginning in 1987, increasing numbers of gynecologists were reporting the successful management of ectopic pregnancy by the use of laparoscopy (the introduction of an optical system into the abdomen through a small incision in the umbilicus) and the delivery of a dose of methotrexate through the scope into the amniotic sac of the fetus developing in the tube. No longer was there a "double-effect" rationale to exonerate the surgeon; we now had a direct lethal assault on the developing child (albeit developing in the wrong place). The moral consequences of this "momentous advance" in gynecologic technology provided a bridge to the use of methotrexate to destroy the child developing in the *correct* place, the womb.

In normative bioethics the use of a drug such as methotrexate would require a sufficient benefit to outweigh the risks: the disease being treated must be of such gravity as to justify the use of the drug. Pregnancy, however, falls comfortably into none of the usual definitions of disease: it is *not* a state inimical to the way one is supposed to feel; it is *not* a condition in which body components and systems are acting inharmoniously (to the contrary, infertility would more likely fall within that definition); it is *not* a state of abnormality—for the pregnant woman functions satisfactorily within society, and the social and physical environment tolerates the pregnant woman perfectly. Pregnancy, then, is not a disease by any normative definition, and the administration of a drug as potent and as toxic as methotrexate cannot be justified within the traditional framework of medical risk/benefit analysis.

Richard Hausknecht, the author of the article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, acknowledged that the "abortion cocktail" was indeed an experiment when he stated in his report that "the protocol [of the experiment] was approved by the investigative review board of the Mount Sinai Medical Center." The Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR Part II) sets forth federal policy for the protection of human subjects in medical experimentation, mandating the establishment of an institutional review board (IRB) in each hospital in which human subjects are used for experimentation. The Code further stipulates how many members each IRB should have, from what disciplines the membership should be drawn, and precisely how each IRB should function. The language of the Code is explicit: each IRB is charged with the responsibility to assure that "risks to subjects are minimized by using procedures which are consistent with sound research design and which do not unnecessarily expose subjects to risk." The Code requires periodic reports from the experimenters and specifies the language and nature of the informed consent presented to each subject. (The explanation of the risks is so detailed that these consents often run to ten or fifteen pages.)

In the Hausknecht report there is no indication of the nature and content of the informed consent. There is no mention of periodic reports to the Mount Sinai Hospital's IRB. There were no precautions or measures designed to minimize the risk accompanying this experimentation. Where was the *constant* medical supervision the *PDR* recommends when using the drug methotrexate? Hausknecht, in the protocol section of the report, speaks of each subject receiving an intramuscular injection of methotrexate, then going home, to return five to seven days later for the administration of the second drug misoprostol; who was supervising the patient in those five to seven days? Where were the blood tests to assure that the subject was not reacting adversely to the methotrexate? Where were the liver and kidney function tests, the tests for pulmonary function, the tests to assure that the bone marrow was functioning normally, the neurological assessments?

Another section of the Code of Federal Regulations (Title 45, Part 46) directs that the Department of Health and Human Services through the National Institutes of Health establish and maintain an Office for Protection from Research Risks. Even if an experiment is not federally funded it falls within the purview of this Office in that human subjects are involved in the experimentation. This Office is responsible for overseeing the functioning of IRBs. Subpart B of this section of the Code deals with "research, development, and related activities involving fetuses, pregnant women, and in vitro fertilization" and requires that each institution conducting

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

research on such human subjects establish, in addition to the IRB, an Ethical Advisory Board consisting of research scientists, physicians, psychologists, educators, lawyers, and ethicists—as well as representatives of the general public. Nowhere in the Hausknecht report is an ethical advisory board even mentioned.

It is customary and even ethically mandatory that experimentation that carries with it a substantial degree of risk to human subjects first be tested in an animal laboratory or, at the very least, on a computer model. There is no mention of any such preliminary testing in the Hausknecht report, probably because no such testing was done. Women were once again used as laboratory rats, much as they had been used in the early days of oral contraceptives, IUDs, silicone breast implants, and the Norplant contraceptive.

Two doctors, Creinin and Vitinghoff, carried out a similar and equally odious experiment on pregnant women using methotrexate and misoprostol at the San Francisco General Hospital and reported their results in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in October 1994. They at least had the minimal decency to provide a group of controls (women to whom only misoprostol was given) but their experiment was otherwise every bit as ethically shabby as the Hausknecht fiasco.

Many troubling questions arise from these two experiments. How could the IRBs of two prestigious university teaching centers have sanctioned such an experiment, despite the multiple strictures, restraints, and codes regarding experimentation on pregnant women and human fetuses? Was there no concern for those women who, having been given the methotrexate, might wish to back out of the experiment with the fetus still alive but lethally afflicted with the well-recognized teratogenic effects of the drug? Where were the preliminary animal testing and computer models establishing some parameters of safety and efficacy for these experiments? Where were the ethical advisory boards mandated by the Office for Protection from Research Risks? How many equally invidious experiments of this sort are now ongoing—and how many are federally funded? Where was the elaborate bureaucratic multitiered machinery designed to scrutinize such experiments? Where were the usual whistle-blowers while these squalid experiments were going on? For that matter, where was the pro-life movement, and why has the public response been so muted?

Hausknecht and company make much of the increased privacy flowing from the "abortion cocktail." This is, to be charitable, a delusion fostered largely by dishonest reporting and slovenly procedure. In their book *RU-486: Misconceptions, Myths, and Morals,* the feminists Janice G. Raymond, Renate Klein, and Lynette J. Dumble point out that all medical abortions, far from being purely private affairs between women and their physicians, are even more public than the conventional surgical (suction) abortions. A woman seeking a medical abortion of any sort must submit to a general physical examination (to assure she is an apt candidate for the drugs in question) as well as to a pelvic examination. She must have a blood test to confirm the pregnancy and an ultrasound examination to assure that the pregnancy is within the established limits of gestation for such an abortion. A legally mandated waiting period may follow, after which the woman must return to be given an injection by a physician or nurse. She must return a third time for the ingestion of the second drug (misoprostol, used both in RU-486 and the new "abortion cocktail"), whereupon she is subjected to a second pelvic examination as well as to an elaborate mix of blood tests. Only then does the woman go home. "To call this an at-home abortion is deceptive," Raymond, Klein, and Dumble noted about medical abortions in general, "since most treatment transpires in the clinic, hospital, or office, and is extremely medicalized."

Moreover, with either RU-486 or with the "cocktail," the ordeal is still not complete. "What actually happens at home can be an excruciatingly long wait for the embryo to be expelled from the uterus, accompanied by pain, bleeding, vomiting, and nausea and other complications that are drawn out over a substantially lengthy period of time." Following the miscarriage the woman must return a fourth time for an examination to ascertain whether the abortion is complete; this usually entails another ultrasound examination as well as a quantitative blood pregnancy test and another pelvic examination. Despite the rhetoric of "privacy," "women in control," and "demedicalization," there have been four office/clinic visits (in the ideal uncomplicated case), two ultrasound examinations, multiple blood tests, and strict medical supervision.

A group of investigators at the University of Edinburgh questioned women who had undergone medical abortion. In their report *What Do Women Want During Medical Abortion,* they found that only 24 percent of the women interviewed preferred to have the actual miscarriage at home; fully three-quarters of the women desired the hospital ambience with physicians, nurses, other women undergoing the identical experience, and support partners present. The miscarriage of a fetus at home is a lonely, physically trying, frightening, and demoralizing experience—one that culminates in the woman viewing her own dead child in a terrifying mass of blood, clot, and tissue between her legs.

The public must be made aware of the deceptions, the ethically deeply flawed experiments, the conscienceless exploitation of women, and the potentially dire consequences to both mother and (surviving)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fetus. The long-term transgenerational consequences to humanity itself must be examined: methotrexate is a drug known to be capable of damage to the human DNA, and as such may induce mutations so grotesque as to be virtually unimaginable.

If there is one ray of light in all this for pro-life forces, it is the prospect of the surgical abortionists crossing rhetorical swords with the medical abortionists—competing with each other for the obscene commercial traffic and trashing each other's methods with abandon. Regardless, by no means does this intolerably unethical and immoral technology spell the end of the legal battle to ban abortion. That battle has only begun. FT

Bishop Colenso on the Pentateuch

Sometimes I wake at night to listen
To Father Walter's coughing in the
Next room; tomorrow he will complain
All day his feet and toes are cold. Sister
Gloria offers him warm tea, honey.
Together they talk about some monstrous
Polish poverty or the Capuchine
Shrine at Poznan where the Little Sisters
Of the Poor wear white cotton armlets, weave
Vestments, the God of our Fathers having
Endowed them with skill in gold, violet,
Purple, green and scarlet yarn, fine linen.

Last night I lightly slept and dreamt again
The final words of Moses. I saw a twirl
Of smoke, Zelophedad's daughters bringing
Biscuits, kinsmen coming up the footpaths,
Walking unguarded, one child holding its
Mother's legs. With the Levitical priests,
Moses enjoins the statutes, offering
Holocausts on undressed stones, peace offerings,
Eating and making merry before God.
Then the Levites proclaim the twelve curses,
Indistinguishable from our own time,
After which the people answer *amen*.

With one hand he piles the undressed stones;
With the other he brings the ax stroke down.
The goat's legs collapse, a rainbow coils
Under the surface of a distant cloud;
The children twist to see the hands dip down
Washed in blood. Light snow has been falling
Off and on this afternoon; Father coughs.
Sister rubs his feet with intimacy.
Someone she loves walked on water, leaving
No prints, no wake. Snow piles the corners
Of the rectory. Days after nights I
Dream, I sleepwalk, breathing, answering *amen*.

Daniel James Sundahl

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To Be a Prophet for the People

Jonathan Sacks

In the year 1165, an agonizing question confronted Moroccan Jewry. A fanatical Muslim sect, the Almohads, had seized power and were embarked on a policy of forced conversions to Islam. The Jewish community was faced with a choice: to affirm the Islamic faith or die. It was not the first nor was it the last such occasion. Throughout the Middle Ages, periods of relative tolerance alternated with phases of fierce religious persecution. Under both Christian and Islamic regimes, Jews were often forced to make a fateful choice between conversion or death.

Some chose martyrdom. Others chose exile. But some acceded to terror and embraced another faith—though inwardly remaining Jews and practicing Judaism in secret. They were the "conversos," or as the Spanish were later to call them, the "marranos."

To other Jews, they posed a formidable moral problem. How were they to be viewed? Ostensibly, they had betrayed their community and their religious heritage. No less seriously, their example was demoralizing. It weakened the resolve of Jews who had been determined to resist, come what may. Yet many of the conversos still wished to remain Jewish, secretly fulfill the commandments, and, when they could, attend the synagogue and pray.

One of them addressed this question to a rabbi. He had, he wrote, under coercion declared his allegiance to another religion. But he remained at heart a faithful Jew. Could he obtain merit by observing in private as many of the Torah's precepts as possible? Was there, in other words, hope left for him as a Jew?

The rabbi's written reply was unambiguous. A Jew who had embraced Islam had forfeited membership in the Jewish community. He was no longer part of the house of Israel. For such a person to fulfill the commandments was meaningless. Worse, it was a sin. The choice was stark and absolute: to be or not to be a Jew. If one chose to be a Jew, one must be prepared to suffer death rather than compromise. If one chose not to be a Jew, then one must not seek to reenter the house one had deserted.

We can understand and even admire the firmness of the rabbi's stance. It is one model of what religious leadership must be. He sets out, without equivocation, the moral choice. He refuses to cloud the issue. There are times when heroism is, for faith, a categorical imperative. Nothing less will do. His reply, though harsh, is not without courage. But another rabbi disagreed.

The name of the first rabbi is lost to us. But that of the second is not. He was Moses Maimonides, the greatest rabbi of the Middle Ages and one of the most formidable Jewish thinkers of all time. Maimonides was no stranger to religious persecution. Born in Cordova in 1135, he had been forced to leave, along with his family, some thirteen years later when the city fell to the Almohads. Twelve years were spent in wandering. In 1160, a temporary liberalization of Almohad rule allowed the family to settle in Morocco. Within five years he was forced to move again, settling first in the land of Israel and ultimately in Egypt.

Maimonides was incensed by the rabbi's reply to the forced convert and was moved to write a response of his own. In it, he frankly disassociates himself from the earlier ruling and castigates its author, whom he describes as a "self-styled sage who has never experienced what so many Jewish communities had to endure in the way of persecution."

Maimonides' reply, the "Epistle on Forced Conversion," is a detailed treatise in its own right. What is striking, given the vehemence with which it begins, is that its conclusions are hardly less demanding than those of the earlier response. A person faced with

JONATHAN SACKS *is the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain. An earlier version of this essay appeared under a different title in his book* Faith in the Future, *published in London by Darton, Longman, and Todd.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

religious persecution, says Maimonides, must leave and settle elsewhere. "If he is compelled to violate even one precept it is forbidden to stay there. He must leave everything he has and travel day and night until he finds a spot where he can practice his religion." This is preferable to martyrdom. Nonetheless, one who chooses to go to his death rather then renounce his faith "has done what is good and proper" for he has given his life for the sanctity of God. What is unacceptable is to stay and excuse oneself on the grounds that if one sins, one does so only under pressure. To do this is to profane God's name, "not exactly willingly, but almost so."

These are Maimonides' conclusions. But surrounding them and constituting the main thrust of his argument is a sustained defense of those who had done precisely what Maimonides had ruled they should not do. Above all, the letter gives conversos hope.

They have done wrong. But it is a forgivable wrong. They acted under coercion and the fear of death. They remain Jews. The acts they do as Jews still win favor in the eyes of God. Indeed doubly so, for when they fulfill a commandment it cannot be to win favor in the eyes of others. They know that when they act as Jews they risk discovery and death. Their secret adherence has a heroism of its own.

What was wrong in the first rabbi's ruling is his insistence that a Jew who yields to terror has forsaken his faith and is henceforth to be excluded from the community. Maimonides insists that it is not so. "It is not right to alienate, scorn, and hate people who desecrate the Sabbath. It is our duty to befriend them and encourage them to fulfill the commandments." In a daring stroke of interpretation, he quotes Proverbs 6:30: "Do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his hunger when he is starving." The conversos who come to the synagogue are hungry for Jewish prayer. They "steal" moments of belonging. They should not be despised, but welcomed.

This Epistle is a masterly example of that most difficult of moral challenges: to combine prescription and compassion. Maimonides leaves us in no doubt as to what he believes Jews should do. But at the same time he is uncompromising in his defense of those who fail to do it. He does not endorse what they have done, but he defends who they are. He asks us to understand their situation. He gives them grounds for self-respect. He holds the doors of the community open.

One could be forgiven for thinking that so complex a moral strategy would read like a study in ambivalence and equivocation. Nothing could be further from the truth. There are few documents in Jewish literature that so blaze with religious passion as Maimonides' "Epistle."

The argument reaches a climax as Maimonides quotes a remarkable sequence of midrashic passages. The common theme of these sources is the idea that a prophet must be a defender of his people before God. God chooses as His prophets those who have the power to transform justice into mercy. To be sure, the voice of Heaven speaks in the language of justice. The people have sinned and must be punished. But at the same time, God sends His prophets to speak in the people's defense. If the prophet adopts the perspective of justice and he too condemns the people, then he has betrayed his mission.

So when Moses, charged with leading the people out of Egypt, replied, "But they will not believe me" (Exodus 4:1), ostensibly he was justified. According to rabbinic tradition, the Israelites in Egypt had sunk into depravity. The biblical narrative itself suggests that Moses' doubts were well founded. Before the exodus and after, the Israelites were a difficult people to lead. But the midrash says that God replied to Moses, "They are believers and the children of believers, but you will ultimately not believe."

Isaiah, too, was justified when he called Israel a "sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity" (Isaiah1:4). But the rabbis interpreted the later episode in which an angel touches Isaiah's lips with a burning coal as a punishment for the prophet's slander of his people (6:5-7).

Maimonides cites a series of such passages and then rises to a crescendo: If this is the sort of punishment meted out to the pillars of the universe, the greatest of the prophets, because they briefly criticized the people—even though the people were guilty of the sins of which they were accused—can we envisage the punishment awaiting those who criticize the conversos, who under threat of death and without abandoning their faith confessed to another religion in which they did not believe?

There is nothing equivocal about Maimonides' defense of those who yielded to pressure. Nor is there any ambivalence about his later analysis of what, in fact, is the right way to behave. He invests both with equal seriousness. There *is* a moral dilemma. There *is* a correct response. But the terms of the dilemma are such that those who choose another response are to have their integrity respected without, at the same time, having their decision endorsed.

In the course of his analysis, Maimonides turns to the biblical hero Elijah. Elijah, we recall, risked his life by being a prophet. Under the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, Baal worship had become the official cult. God's prophets were being killed. Those who survived were in hiding. Elijah nonetheless risked a direct confrontation with the king, which resulted in the great public challenge at Mount Carmel. He faced four hundred of Baal's representatives. Elijah was determined to settle the question of religious truth once and for all. He addressed the assembled people and told them to choose one way or another:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for God or for Baal. They must no longer "halt between two opinions." Truth was about to be decided by a test. If it lay with Baal, fire would consume the offering prepared by his priests. If it lay with God, fire would descend to Elijah's offering.

Elijah won the confrontation. The people cried out, "The Lord, He is God." The priests of Baal were routed. But the story does not end there. Jezebel sends a message to him: a warrant is out for his death. Elijah escapes to Mount Horeb. There he receives a strange vision. He witnesses a whirlwind that shatters rocks, then an earthquake, then a fire. But the vision leads him to understand that God is not in these things. Then God speaks to him in a "still, small voice," and tells him to appoint Elisha as his successor.

The episode is enigmatic, and it is made all the more so by a strange feature of the text. Immediately *before* the vision, God asks, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" and Elijah replies, "I am moved by zeal for the Lord, the God of Hosts" (1 Kings 19:9-10). Immediately *after* the vision, God asks the same question, and Elijah gives the same answer (19:13-14). The midrash turns the text into a dialogue:

> Elijah: The Israelites have broken God's covenant.
> God: Is it then your covenant?
> Elijah: They have torn down Your altars.
> God: But were they *your* altars?
> Elijah: They have put Your prophets to the sword.
> God: But you are alive.
> Elijah: I alone am left.
> God: Instead of hurling accusations against Israel, should you not have pleaded their cause?

The meaning of the midrash is clear. The zealot takes the part of God. But God expects something else from His prophets. They must pray on behalf of humanity.

The repeated question and answer is now to be understood in its tragic depth. Elijah declares himself to be zealous for God. He is shown that God is not disclosed in dramatic confrontation: not in the whirlwind or the earthquake or the fire. God now asks him again, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah *repeats* that he is zealous for God. He has not understood that religious leadership calls for another kind of virtue—the way of the still, small voice. God now indicates that someone else must lead. Elijah must hand his mantle on to Elisha.

Once again we are struck by the moral complexity set forth by the midrash. It is clear that God was with Elijah in the confrontation on Mount Carmel. He sends His fire, and He vindicates His prophet. Elijah is one of the Bible's religious heroes. He is not content to hide and save his life while Israel lapses into idolatry. Yet the midrash insists—and in so doing is faithful to the intimations of the text itself—that religious leadership is not so simply reducible to good or evil. To be sure, the Israelites have been unfaithful. They have "halted between two opinions." But if they served idols, they did so at the bidding of their king and under fear of death. If Elijah believes he is the only person of faith left alive, he is wrong.

We are now far from the days of Maimonides, and farther still from those of Elijah. But their conflicts are ours. They repeat themselves whenever religious leadership must be exercised at a time when faith is under threat. There is no simple equation of idolatry in the days of Ahab, forced conversion in twelfth-century Spain, and secularization today. But in each case, a religious tradition is overwhelmed by forces antithetical to it, and faith is forced into heroic postures.

At such times, there is an almost overwhelming temptation to see religious leadership as confrontational. Not only must truth be proclaimed but falsehood must be denounced. Choices must be set out as stark divisions. Not to condemn is to condone. The rabbi who condemned the conversos had faith in his heart, logic on his side, and Elijah as his precedent.

But the midrash and Maimonides set before us another model. A prophet hears not one imperative but two: prescription and compassion, a love of truth and an abiding solidarity with those for whom that truth has become eclipsed. To preserve tradition and at the same time the unity of those addressed by that tradition is the difficult, necessary task of religious leadership in an unreligious age. FT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Happened at Beijing

Mary Ann Glendon

"You are going to Beijing to be witnesses," the Holy See's Undersecretary for Relations with States told us as we left for the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women last September—daunting words for our band of fourteen women and eight men from nine countries and five continents. In the turmoil of the next two weeks, however, the idea of being witnesses helped our diverse group to coalesce into a unified team that would work, first, to make the documents issued by the conference more responsive to the actual lives of women, and, second—in keeping with the Catholic Church's traditional mission to the poor—to be a voice for the marginalized and voiceless women who can seldom make themselves heard in the corridors of power.

We hoped to avoid the situation that developed at the UN's 1994 Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, where an abortion rights initiative led by a hard-edged U.S. delegation pushed all other population and development issues into the background. The Holy See's efforts to correct that skewed emphasis never got through to the public. [See George Weigel, "What Happened at Cairo," FT, February 1995—*Eds.*] For the most part, the press accepted the population lobby's caricature of the Vatican at Cairo as anti-woman, anti-sex, and in favor of unrestrained procreation.

Before the Beijing conference opened, indications were that most nations had little disposition to reopen the fragile consensus that had been reached at Cairo. The idea that abortion was a legitimate tool of population control had been expressly rejected in the Cairo document. The U.S. administration, chastened by the November 1994 elections, was unlikely to openly lead another controversial charge. And in any event, the Beijing conference was not a population conference; its mandate was "Action for Equality, Development, and Peace." On those topics, we believed, the Holy See's positions, drawn from the Church's teachings on social and economic justice, stood a better chance of being heard. Our hopes in that regard were only slightly dimmed by our growing awareness that few media people had a clear idea of the subject and scope of the Beijing conference.

The failure of the press (and even many delegates) to do their homework was understandable. The Beijing documents (a brief Declaration and a long-winded Program of Action) were a 149-page (single-spaced) hodge-podge of the good, the bad, and the silly. To a lawyer's eye, they resembled a sprawling piece of legislation, with slabs of ideological pork interspersed among commonsense provisions and bureaucratic boilerplate. They had been produced, naturally, by a committee—the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

The drafting process, through two preparatory conferences, was heavily influenced by population control lobbyists and old-line, hard-line feminist groups. Negotiators from members of the UN and its specialized agencies reached agreement fairly easily on the bulk of the provisions, but a large proportion of the draft documents went to Beijing in brackets, signifying that no accord could be reached at the preparatory stage.

From the beginning, the documents were at war with themselves in several respects. Many provisions addressed issues of equal opportunity, education, and development in a sensible way. But reading the drafts overall, one would have no idea that most women marry, have children, and are urgently concerned with how to mesh family life with participation in broader social and economic spheres. The implicit vision of women's progress was based on the model—increasingly challenged by men and women alike—in which family responsibilities are avoided or subordinated to personal advancement. When dealing with health, education, and young girls, the drafts emphasized sex and reproduction to the neglect of many other crucial issues. The overall effect was like the leaning tower of Pisa, admirable from some angles, but unbalanced, and resting on a shaky foundation.

The first morning's colorful opening ceremony in the Great Hall of the People was an odd mixture of the sublime and the silly—as though replicating the conference documents. Mistresses of ceremonies who appeared to be on loan from the trade show commissariat presided in sequinned evening gowns over a program that mingled ballet dancers and hula-hula girls, a performance by the Chinese Women's Philharmonic orchestra and a parade of fashions, world-class gymnastics and a martial arts display where the women vanquished all the men.

That was the last hour of relaxation our delegation had until the conference ended. Our negotiators, four women and three men, worked virtually around the clock for the next two weeks in as many as seven

MARY ANN GLENDON, *who led the Vatican delegation to the Beijing Conference, is the Learned Hand Professor of Law at Harvard University.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

separate, concurrent sessions, dealing with the knotty problems that had been left for resolution in Beijing. The rest of us tried to collect and read reams of conference documents, to maintain a presence of at least two persons in the plenary session, to staff our makeshift headquarters, and to "witness" in our communications with other delegations, the media, and Catholics attending the parallel women's forum in Huairou.

We were heartened by Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's speech in the opening plenary session. Mrs. Bhutto zeroed in on some of the defects in the documents. They were, she said, "disturbingly weak" on the role of the traditional family and on the connection between family disintegration and general moral decay. At a subsequent session, U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton was clearly mindful of the Senate's bipartisan resolution instructing American delegates not to denigrate motherhood and the family. She condemned direct coercion in population control programs and made several positive references to women's roles as mothers and family members.

Mrs. Clinton's carefully worded speech was just one of many signs that the U.S. had drastically overhauled its strategy since Cairo. Throughout the Beijing conference, the American delegation avoided taking the initiative on controversial issues. They maintained an appearance of cordiality toward the Holy See, skirting open confrontation in negotiations. Members of the U.S. delegation frequently described the Vatican delegation to the press as "conciliatory"—as though we, not they, had changed since Cairo. Some of the beans were spilled by one American negotiator, after she had piped up briefly in favor of rights based on sexual orientation. Later, she told two members of the Holy See team she had momentarily forgotten that "we were told not to speak out on that one."

In my opening statement, I reaffirmed the positions the Holy See had taken at previous conferences, and called attention to several areas where the Beijing drafts needed to be improved. The documents barely mentioned marriage, motherhood, and the family—except negatively as impediments to women's self-realization (and as associated with violence and oppression). The women's health section focused disproportionately on sexual and reproductive matters, with scarcely a glance toward nutrition, sanitation, tropical diseases, access to basic health services, or even maternal morbidity and mortality. Women's poverty was addressed in narrow terms as chiefly a problem of equality between women and men, slighting the influence of family breakdown and unjust economic structures. I pointed out that, without recognition and support of their roles in child-raising, effective equality would remain elusive for far too many women. I concluded with the observation that there can be no real progress for women, or men, at the expense of children or of the underprivileged.

These points seemed so reasonable to us that, in the first few days of the conference, we were confident that they would find wide support. Ominous signs, however, soon appeared. Some delegations from developing countries seemed less independent than at Cairo. Holy See negotiators were often receiving short shrift from chairpersons wielding heavy gavels. The procedural difficulties became acute in sessions dealing with the controversial health sections of the draft. Many otherwise inactive delegations showed up, and the negotiating room became especially crowded and chaotic. At one point, when our negotiator attempted to intervene in support of a bracketed paragraph urging that women be informed of the health risks of promiscuity and certain contraceptive methods, the Chair ruled her out of order on grounds that the Holy See, as a Permanent Observer, did not even have the right to vote. By the time the Chair was forced to retract that mistake, the language in question had been eliminated. The tenor of discussion on the issue is captured by the remark of an Egyptian delegate: "If we start telling women about the harmful effects of contraceptives, they might not use them anymore."

By Thursday of the first week, our negotiators were bringing back news of another unexpected development. A minority coalition, led by the powerful fifteen-member European Union negotiating as a bloc, was pushing a version of the sexual and abortion rights agenda that had been rejected by the Cairo conference. The EU-led coalition was so intent on its unfinished Cairo agenda that it was stalling negotiations on other issues. Equally disturbing, the coalition was taking positions with ominous implications for universal human rights.

Joined by a few other countries (Barbados, Canada, Namibia, South Africa), the EU was opposing the inclusion of key, pertinent principles from UN instruments where the nations of the world had recognized certain core rights and obligations as universal. The controversy centered on five crucial areas:

(1) To bring the treatment of marriage and the family more into line with women's actual needs and aspirations, the Holy See and other negotiators had proposed references to standard international language. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an obvious source. It makes marriage a fundamental right, and provides that "the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state" (Art. 16). The EU coalition not only opposed that language, but pressed to pluralize "family" wherever it appeared in the documents. This move would have been innocent enough if it simply referred to the fact that there is no single form of family organization.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But here it seemed intended to place a range of alternative life styles on the same legal footing as families founded on kinship or marriage, undermining the legal preferences that many countries accord to child-raising families.

(2) Similarly, the coalition contested every effort to include the word "motherhood" except where it appeared in a negative light, even though the Universal Declaration provides that "Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance" (Art. 25).

(3) The coalition sought to remove all references to religion, morals, ethics, or spirituality, except where religion was portrayed as associated with intolerance or extremism. During one stormy negotiating session on women's health, an EU negotiator even opposed a reference to codes of medical ethics, insisting, astonishingly, that "ethics have no place in medicine." The coalition also objected to a paragraph providing for freedom of conscience and religion in the context of education, in spite of the Universal Declaration's provision that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion . . . [including] freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance" (Art. 18).

(4) Though the Beijing documents had identified the situation of the "girl child" as a "critical area," the coalition attempted to eliminate all recognition of parental rights and duties from the draft, even rejecting direct quotations from the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They seemed indifferent to the fact that the Universal Declaration and subsequent human rights documents have consistently protected the parent-child relationship from outside intrusion.

(5) Finally, the coalition made strenuous efforts to remove references to "human dignity" as used in the Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Recognition of inherent human dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family" is the very "foundation of freedom, justice, and peace." They apparently feared that dignity language might legitimate departures from the equality principle. Equality and dignity, however, are inseparable in the Declaration. To eliminate dignity is to undermine the concept that human rights, including equality, belong to all men and women by virtue of their inherent worth as human beings, rather than existing at the whim of this or that political regime.

The EU caucus' assault on key provisions of the universal human rights corpus was something of a mystery. Europe, after all, prides itself on being the cradle and custodian of many of these ideas. More puzzling still, the EU negotiators' stances on these matters were at variance with similar provisions in most of their own national constitutions and with the underlying principles of their own family assistance programs.

In the stark vision promoted by the EU caucus at Beijing, there is no room for the idea that society has a special interest in providing the best possible conditions for raising children. Family life, marriage, and motherhood would be worthy of no more protection than any other ways in which adults choose to order their lives. The girl child, her parents nowhere visible, would be alone with her rights. A document embodying that vision would cast a shadow over programs and policies that provide assistance to child-raising families, just at a time when most countries are already curtailing their social expenditures. A document on women's issues from which all positive references to motherhood and family life were removed would send a discouraging message to women who take pride and satisfaction in family roles.

The EU negotiators' positions can be explained in part by a phenomenon Americans know well—the tendency when arguing for a favorite right to brush aside all other rights and obligations. The EU-led coalition was so single-minded in its determination to seed the Beijing documents with sexual and reproductive rights that it was willing to let important competing values go by the boards. At least that was how it seemed when the Holy See's Ambassador to the UN, Archbishop Renato Martino, and I met with Christina Alberdi, leader of the European Union caucus, and, later on the same day, with several members of the French delegation. We raised our concerns about human rights issues at both meetings. The delegates and their assistants listened politely, thanked us for our point of view, but were not forthcoming with any explanation.

After several similar encounters, I was reminded of the Cook County criminal courts of the 1960s, when occasionally the rumor would go around the corridors that "the fix was in" on a particular case. I began to wonder whether a blend of sexism and political expediency had induced some governments to regard the women's conference as unimportant in itself, and thus to treat delegation appointments as handy sops to throw to old-line feminists and population control zealots. That would explain the now unmistakable emergence of an unfinished Cairo agenda, the hot pursuit of sexual rights, and the efforts to make sure that parents would not come between their daughters and those who know better than her parents.

While our negotiators struggled to break that impasse, others of us spent many hours talking with representatives of various Catholic organizations who had been attending the women's forum at Huairou. We listened carefully to the different points of view they brought to the documents. One particularly impressive group was the Neo-Catechumens—intelligent, dedicated, lay missionaries who work among the neediest populations in the poorest parts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the world. They had followed the conference closely, and, at the end of the first week, urged the Holy See to reject the documents in their entirety. The Declaration and Program of Action were, in their view, so permeated with a false anthropology, so obsessed with sexuality to the exclusion of other issues, so profoundly subversive of the good for women, that the best way for the Church to witness to the truth would be to denounce them and decline to join the Conference consensus. As matters stood then, that was a live option.

Later that day, several members of our delegation made ourselves available for general discussion with Catholic groups. A glance around the crowded meeting room, however, revealed that the gathering had also drawn several inquisitive journalists, the doyenne of American feminism Betty Friedan, and members of the anti-Catholic, population control front group that calls itself Catholics for a Free Choice. Few comments from this assembly directly concerned conference issues. The chief preoccupations of most who spoke seemed to be power, sex, and the Catholic Church herself.

A great many critical remarks on decision-making power within the Church and the male priesthood came from Catholic women who seemed depressingly unfamiliar with basic principles of religious freedom, with the dynamic feminism of John Paul II, or with the vast range of opportunities for female and lay participation in Church activities, processes, and ministries. Even some women with religious vocations seemed to think of the priesthood as a powerful "job" that ought to be made available on an equal opportunity basis, rather than a calling to humble self-sacrificing service.

Many of those with whom we met seemed not to realize the number of opportunities for important service going begging because there are not enough women or men with the time, desire, and dedication to help. I urged them to respond to John Paul II's call for women to "assume new forms of leadership in service," noting his simultaneous call to the institutions of the Church "to welcome this contribution of women."

Meanwhile, we had reached conference midpoint, and negotiations were still stalled. It seemed unlikely that the EU caucus' negotiating stances reflected government policy or public opinion in their home countries. On Friday night, we composed a press release calling attention to the conflicts between the positions being taken at Beijing by the EU caucus and settled principles of national and international law.

By Monday, there was a marked change in the negotiating atmosphere. Questions had begun to be posed in European legislatures, including the EU Parliament, concerning what their delegations were up to in faraway Beijing. "Why did you have to bring all this out in the open?" complained one EU delegate who was apparently unfamiliar with the concept of government in the sunshine. Negotiations began moving swiftly, and the text began to change in some key respects. The final documents were rapidly taking shape, section by section, in different negotiating rooms, and seemed to be moving toward something we might be able to accept—at least in part.

The picture in the end was mixed. Many of the best provisions—on women's education, poverty, the environment, and peace—are likely to wither unless supported by major financial commitments and nurtured by well-thought-out programs, while other provisions actually threaten both universal human rights and the well-being of women.

In favor of the Holy See's associating itself with the documents to some extent, nevertheless, there were a number of considerations. The heart of the Program for Action consists of many provisions that are consonant with Catholic teachings on dignity, freedom, and social justice: those dealing with the needs of women in poverty; with strategies for development, literacy, and education; for ending violence against women; for building a culture of peace; and with providing access for women to employment, land, capital, and technology. Other worthwhile provisions concerned the connection between the feminization of poverty and family disintegration, the relation of environmental degradation to scandalous patterns of production and consumption, the discrimination against women that begins with abortion of female fetuses, the promotion of partnership and mutual respect between men and women, and the need for reform of the international economic order. The specific economic recommendations mark a healthy break from the discredited Marxist ideas that once prevailed at UN gatherings. Many central ideas, moreover, had been introduced by or with the help of the Holy See over the years (e.g., the emphasis on women's education, and the insistence that the human being must be at the center of concern in development).

Even the worst parts of the draft documents had undergone some improvement, thanks to the efforts of our tireless and talented negotiators, Msgr. Frank Dewane, Patricia Donahoe, John Klink, Msgr. Diarmuid Martin, Janne Matlary, Gail Quinn, and Sheri Rickert. In the preparatory conferences, they had introduced equal educational opportunity for refugees; "general access" for women, as well as "equal access," to education; and the reference to women's roles as peace educators in the family and society. By the end of the conference, they had secured references to relevant universal rights and obligations in all five areas where those concepts had been threatened.

A few swallows, admittedly, do not make a summer. The positive changes tempered the tone of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the documents and maintained continuity with the rights tradition that will inform future interpretations. But the documents are still seriously unbalanced. The Cairo principle that abortion must not be promoted as a method of family planning was eventually reaffirmed, but the Cairo language on support for parental rights and responsibilities and respect for religious and cultural values is stronger than in parallel provisions in the Beijing documents.

Though EU efforts to gain inclusion of the phrase "sexual rights" were rebuffed, the final documents do contain ambiguous rights language in the areas of sexuality and fertility. A paragraph in the health section, for example, speaks of women's "right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence." The U.S. was well-satisfied with this result, according to a post-conference memorandum from Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs Timothy Wirth to members of the American delegation. Wirth's evaluation of the Beijing Platform was that it "met the U.S. government's goals (reaffirm important commitments made at previous international conferences, including human rights of women in reproductive health and rights)."

There was no consensus on what the vague new language means beyond the rights to say no and be free of sexual exploitation. By general agreement, it does not cover sexual orientation, Canada's energetic efforts to introduce rights in that area having encountered broad opposition at the conference.

Arguments will no doubt be made that references to women's rights "to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility" implicitly recognize abortion as a human right. Such an interpretation is excluded, however, by Paragraph 107(k), a direct quotation from Cairo, which provides: "Any measures or changes related to abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national or local level according to the national legislative process." This language was necessary in view of the fact that, unlike the United States and China, most countries restrict and strictly regulate abortion. Even nations like Sweden with relatively permissive abortion laws do not follow the U.S. in characterizing abortion as a "right." Paragraph 107(k) contains other language that militates against abortion as a fundamental right: "reduce recourse to abortion," "eliminate the need for abortion," "help avoid repeat abortion." One would hardly say of an important right like free speech, for example, that governments should reduce it, eliminate the need for it, and help avoid its repetition.

Even if there were no such specific language in the Cairo and Beijing documents, it is a basic principle of interpretation that fundamental rights cannot be created or destroyed by implication. Moreover, the Beijing conference had no authority to add to or tinker with the corpus of universal human rights. The UN historically has conducted that process with great care and gravity, most recently at the 1993 Human Rights Conference in Vienna. It would indeed be a dark day if human rights could be revised in disorderly negotiating sessions such as those where the Beijing health sections were rammed through.

As at Cairo, the Holy See was concerned that language on sexual and reproductive "health" would be used to promote the quick-fix approach to getting rid of poverty by getting rid of poor people. Much of the foundation money that swirled around the Beijing process was aimed at forging a link between development aid and programs that pressure poor women into abortion, sterilization, and use of risky contraceptive methods. That point has also troubled distinguished non-Catholic observers. In the wake of Cairo, Harvard economist-philosopher Amartya Sen criticized a "dangerous tendency" on the part of developed nations to search for solutions to overpopulation that "treat the people involved not as reasonable beings, allies faced with a common problem, but as impulsive and uncontrolled sources of great social harm, in need of strong discipline." Sen charged that by giving priority to "family planning arrangements in the Third World countries over other commitments such as education and health care," international policy makers "produce negative effects on people's well-being and reduce their freedoms." In a similar vein, the British medical journal *Lancet* blasted the Beijing documents for a "new colonialism" designed to control rather than liberate women.

The Holy See's position as the conference came to an end was thus a difficult one. The documents had been improved in some respects. But in other ways they were even more disappointing than the Cairo document, which the Holy See had been able to join only partially and with many formal reservations. After an intense session in which members of our delegation shared their views, hopes, doubts, and concerns about the documents, our assessment of their pros and cons was communicated to the Vatican Secretariat of State. On Thursday morning, we received the Holy Father's decision: accept what is positive, but vigorously reject what cannot be accepted.

Accordingly, the Holy See delegation associated itself in part, with several reservations, with the conference documents. As at Cairo, it reaffirmed its well-known positions on abortion and family planning methods. It could not accept the health section at all. A controversy over the word "gender" that loomed before the conference had been largely defused with a consensus that gender was to be understood according to ordinary usage in the United Nations context. The Holy See, however, deemed it prudent to attach to its reservations a further, more nuanced, statement of interpretation, in which it dissociated itself from rigid biological determinism as well as from the notion

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that sexual identity is indefinitely malleable. In keeping with the Holy Father's instruction to vigorously reject what was unacceptable, my concluding statement on behalf of the Holy See was sharply critical of the conference documents for the remaining deficiencies that our delegation had tried from the beginning to publicize and remedy.

The most important political lesson to be taken from the Beijing conference is that huge international conferences are not suitable settings for addressing complex questions of social and economic justice or grave issues of human rights. Unfortunately, there is an increasing tendency for advocates of causes that have failed to win acceptance through ordinary democratic processes to resort to the international arena, far removed (they hope) from scrutiny and accountability. The sexual libertarians, old-line feminists, and coercive population controllers can be expected to keep on trying to insert their least popular ideas into UN documents for unveiling at home as "international norms."

A number of lingering questions about Beijing merit the attention of investigative reporters. What deals did the affluent nations make with their client states? Why did the EU caucus champion an agenda so far removed from the urgent concerns of most of the world's women? Why did delegates from countries with strong family protection provisions in their constitutions (e.g., Germany, Ireland, Italy) not break ranks with the EU when it attacked the spirit of those provisions? Why were the conference documents so skewed from the beginning? Who paid for the voyages of thousands of lobbyists at Huairou whose main interest was not in women's needs and rights, but in controlling women's fertility?

American delegate Geraldine Ferraro's description of the Beijing conference as marking an end to the North-South conflicts that have plagued UN conferences in the past was disingenuous. The delegations from affluent countries that battled so boldly at Cairo or Beijing for their ideas about population control and sexual rights were timid as mice when it came to making commitments of resources. In defiance of evidence that economic development and women's education lead to lowered fertility rates, the developed countries made it clear they wanted population control on the cheap. The relative silence of Third World delegates on issues vital to women in their own countries was bewildering. How can one explain that many delegations from poor nations came to sessions involving sexual and reproductive matters with well-prepared position papers, yet were absent or silent when resources and other crucial issues were discussed? Since many of those same delegations entered formal reservations at the end of the conference, chances are the folks back home will never suspect that their representatives did not speak up in negotiations where a few strong voices could have made a difference.

The significance of the Beijing documents should neither be exaggerated nor minimized. The Declaration and Platform are nonbinding documents that may or may not serve as international guidelines for the way various private and public actors deal with the issues they cover. The authority of the worst parts of the documents is diminished by their vagueness, their inconsistency with respected international documents, and by the unusually large number of UN members who expressed dissent. When 43 of 181 nations present have formally registered serious concerns, it is hard to speak of a consensus. The authority of the constructive sections, on the other hand, is supported by consensus and amplified by their similarity to provisions in documents from other international conferences, most recently the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development.

The significance of Beijing for human rights is mainly in the nature of a warning. As the fiftieth anniversary of the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights approaches, the Beijing conference appears to have been a testing ground for certain ideas and approaches that will be advanced again. We have not seen the last of the effort to make abortion a fundamental right, or of the attempt to depose heterosexual marriage and child-raising families from their traditionally preferred positions. Neither have we seen the last of selective use of rights language to advance an anti-rights agenda—exemplified at Beijing by the emphasis on formal equality at the expense of motherhood's special claim to protection, and by the elimination of most references to religion and parental rights. Worrisome, too, is the trivialization of universally recognized core principles through the attempted addition of vague new rights.

All this is familiar stuff to Americans. At the international level, it is evidence of the continuing colonization of the universal language of human rights by an impoverished dialect that has already made great inroads on political discourse in the United States. Its features include: rights envisioned without corresponding individual or social responsibilities; one's favorite rights touted as absolute with others ignored; the rights-bearer imagined as radically autonomous and self-sufficient; and the willy-nilly proliferation of new rights.

That dialect contrasts with the broad, rich, and balanced Universal Declaration where the individual rights-bearer's dignity is resoundingly affirmed, but the family is recognized as the basic social unit. In the Universal Declaration, fundamental individual rights are simultaneously affirmed and situated within the social contexts that determine whether rights, freedom, and dignity will become realities: "In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare in a democratic society."

Not least alarming about the assault on the human rights tradition by powerful actors at Beijing is that it went virtually unreported. As far as the American press was concerned, the human rights story was the Chinese treatment of Harry Wu. To European journalists, it was the failed efforts of a few Islamic countries to authorize opting out of certain equality measures on cultural and religious grounds. The U.S. was correct, of course, to condemn brazen violations of universal rights. The Europeans were right, too, that human rights ought not to be nullified by cultural exceptions. But neither should the catalog of human rights be redefined and expanded to "universalize" the highly individualistic ideologies of modernizing elites. Nor must human rights be sharply separated from the cultural and religious contexts in which rights are rooted and protected. Nor must the corpus of core rights and obligations be casually altered. As memories fade about why it was necessary after World War II to affirm the existence of certain inalienable rights, the citizens of the world must be vigilant to prevent trivialization and dilution of those basic protections of human dignity.

In the end, one may hope that the good in the nonbinding Beijing documents will survive and flourish—especially since, as any good feminist would say, they must be seen in context. The context in this case is the framework of the overarching universal human rights tradition.

John Paul II's instruction to his Beijing delegation reflected the approach he has taken to women's issues in his writings. In the 1995 *World Day of Peace* message, he noted that "when one looks at the great process of women's liberation," one sees that the journey has been a difficult one, with its "share of mistakes," but headed toward a better future for women and the entire human family. In his recent *Letter to Women*, he added, "This journey must go on!" It is characteristic of this Pope that, in confronting flawed human enterprises of various sorts, he seeks to find and build on what is sound and healthy, while identifying and criticizing what is likely to be harmful to human flourishing.

Looking toward the future, the Pope stressed in his pre-conference message to Secretary-General Gertrude Mongella that the success of the gathering will depend on whether it offers a "vision capable of sustaining objective and realistic responses to the struggle and frustration that continue to be a part of all too many women's lives." Ultimately, it is up to concerned citizens, women and men, to bring the seedlings of "equality, development, and peace" to full flower, and to protect them from the encroaching culture of death. Fortunately, we do not garden alone. Not only are we surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, but divine grace is always operating in the world, inviting us to cooperate with it in building the civilization of life and love. FT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Report

Post-Communism and Its Discontents

Tomás Halík

In the exciting days of November 1989, during the occupation strike at Charles University in Prague, the students initiated a cycle of lectures under the rubric of "what they did not teach us at school." Philosophers, economists, and historians who for political reasons had not been allowed to teach—often working as stokers or night porters—met at last with eager students to discuss banned authors and tabooed themes.

Among the forbidden fruits on which the students feasted, theology and the philosophy of religion were prominent. Every ironic comment about state-enforced atheism filled the students' hall with a thunder of laughter and applause. In the audience were many recent converts who had been holding secret prayer meetings and distributing illegal literature. But even among the nonbelievers, there was a conspicuous sympathy and solidarity—a joy in recognizing that "everything was now different," that another of the things demonized by communism was now available for them.

Five years later, I was invited by a student club to discuss religion in the same building in which we had met during the "Velvet Revolution." But religion had lost its aura of forbidden fruit. During those five years, my listeners had seen mass assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses and evangelical TV programs by American-style Pentecostal preachers. They had read polemics about church property restitution, they had met Hari Krishnas in saffron robes, they could find Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* sitting beside *Discussions with Cardinal Ratzinger* in bookstores.

"Do you really believe that you have been bought by the blood of Jesus Christ?" asked the first student questioner at the end of my lecture. "You speak of the necessity for interreligious dialogue and tolerance. Do you believe that Jesus is *the* way, *the* truth and *the* life and that whoever does not believe in Him will be condemned?"

"I object to your partiality to Christianity," said a second questioner. "In the Age of Aquarius, no single religion dominates any more. All religions give the same account. They're merely ships to convey us to the coast of spiritual knowledge, where faith is no longer required."

"There exists no absolute understanding and no eternal Truth," declared a third. "All claims of truth and binding morality must be deconstructed. Everything is relative. In a pluralist system of political and economic democracy, each and every one may enter into the free competition of ideas, but he who claims an absolute truth threatens the foundations of the very system: he is a potential fascist."

I answered, as best I could, in the spirit of post-Vatican II Catholicism, which assumes and relies upon secular humanism to be its dialogue partner. But I fear my words were somewhat lost, for my required partner did not show up. I stood instead in a postmodern scene, facing the three living heirs of dead modernism: fundamentalism, with its attempt to return to the premodern; syncretism, with its New Age and neo-gnosticism; and deconstruction, with its skeptical nihilism and moral relativism.

Though I could sympathize with portions of what each of my questioners had to say, the fact that modernism—the modernism which theologians assume they must address—could disappear so completely in five short years signals grave dangers for the post-Communist societies of Eastern Europe. Fundamentalists warn us against the godless West. Polls show, however, that the majority of post-Communist countries (especially the Czech Republic) are far more de-Christianized than America and Western Europe.

The result of the Communists' forty-year atheistic propaganda effort was not a convinced atheist, the new socialist man, possessing all the divine attributes. For a long time, in fact, the divine attributes were not owned by any kind of *man* but by the State and Party. The Marxist regime, having squeezed religion out of public life, immediately became a pseudo-religious and pseudo-ecclesiastical system in its own right.

The base of socialism was an unwritten contract: the citizen was not to attempt to interfere in public life, and the State would guarantee a problem-free vegetation (neither poor nor rich). To this end, the State would tolerate almost everything: a poor work

Tomás Halík, *a Catholic priest, teaches in the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University in Prague and serves as President of the Czech Christian Academy.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ethic, petty theft of communal property, irresponsible and inconsiderate behavior toward nature and neighbor. This contract logically led to a moral corruption and disintegration of values on a scale previously unknown. Marxism did in fact cultivate a new man, but one about as far from the superman of the socialist realism novels as Sancho Panza was from Don Quixote. Homo Sovieticus was the ultimate conformer, lacking all creativity, responsibility, and initiative.

The Soviet Man may have seemed the ideal contractual partner for the Soviet State. But though he gave up his claim to conscience, he by no means gave up his claim to material wealth; Homo Sovieticus was on average much poorer than Western man, but certainly no less consumption-oriented. Socialism predictably began to fall behind the West in practically all respects, but most conspicuously economically. And quite naturally the system began meeting with opposition not only from the few moral critics who refused to suppress their consciences, but also from the masses whose consumerism could not be satisfied by the system.

The Polish Catholic Church deserves enormous recognition for providing intellectual dissidents a place to meet with each other and with unsatisfied workers. The Solidarity movement, born in the wake of John Paul II's first visit to his homeland, brought to the history of dissent against communism a new and decisive quality. The Czech "Velvet Revolution" was also stimulated to a certain extent by a religious event: a pilgrimage of ten thousand Czechs and Slovaks to Rome for the sanctification of Agnes of Bohemia.

Although all the Communist states fought religion in remarkably similar ways, the tactics of the Church varied considerably from country to country. A decisive factor was the type of inculturation of faith in the society, an aspect of long-term historical development. The most conspicuously diverse are Poland and the Czech Republic. In Poland, the Church relied on its traditional role as bearer of national identity. Cardinal Wyszynski was the archetype of moral leader and societal focal point at a time when the nation had no legitimate political leader. The Polish Church managed to link the popular religion of the masses with the advanced thought of the Catholic intellectual elites, influenced by French personalism, Thomism, and phenomenology: this was the environment that produced Karol Wojtyla. Poland has always been drawn to its Church at times of national threat. The rise of Stalinism reawakened this instinct and the Church became a power that even the Polish Communist regime had to respect.

The years since the fall of communism, however, have required the Polish Church to redefine its role. Prior to 1989, it had stood as a political, cultural, and moral *antagonist* of the State. The success of this role at building national consensus has caused difficulty in abandoning it for the role of a social *partner*. The recent political offensive of the Polish neo-Communists has made it even more difficult for the Church to shed its counterculture mantle.

Unlike Polish history, Czech history has been marked by a painful tension between national identity and Catholicism. The tension, which dates back to the Hussite wars and the violent re-Catholicizing of the seventeenth century, was intensified by the nationalism of the last century. The already highly secularized Czechs seemed ideal for a radically atheistic society. The goal of communism, a *town without God*, seemed almost within reach in the Czech lands.

The Czech Communists yielded to the temptation of trying to accelerate the already promising process of secularization with an especially hard-line persecution of the Church. And in the psychology of the Czech national, there is a traditional tendency to identify with the oppressed. The result of the persecution was a growth in the Church's moral prestige—to a degree unheard of in the whole of modern Czech history. Instead of a ghetto, the underground Czech Church found an intense and fruitful dialogue with the equally outlawed secular humanist intellectuals. Although the official Church in Czechoslovakia had been affected by the reforms of Vatican II only to a limited extent, a number of the Czech Catholic intelligentsia maintained strong ties to modern intellectual discourse.

Although the popular Czech Church was quite small, the number of converts and sympathizers grew—especially among youth and the intelligentsia, and in the larger towns. Several of the Catholic intelligentsia understood that to lead a democratic confrontation with the dying Communist despotism would allow the Church to fulfill two of its roles: defender of human rights and initiator of the moral renewal of society. The assumption of these roles, however, carried the requirement that the Church cooperate widely, with both nonbelievers and other denominations, in "solidarity with all those seeking truth and loving freedom." An awareness of this requirement resulted in a program for the "Decade of Spiritual Renewal of the Nation," open letters by Cardinal Tomasek, and the effort at a new and more positive evaluation of Jan Hus.

In November 1989, Cardinal Tomasek uttered the memorable words, "At this historic moment in our history, I stand, as does the entire Catholic Church, on the side of the people." The Prague Cathedral, filled with both believers and nonbelievers, thundered in delight. The great hopes of the Church—that the scars of the past would heal, that the wall between Church and nation would crumble, that the sacrifices of believers in times of persecution would now bear fruit—seemed ready to be fulfilled.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But these hopes were not fulfilled in the years after communism's fall. And the moral prestige of the Church has fallen again in the eyes of the Czech people.

The flag of moral renewal in society, which the Church had hoist during the dramatic days of November 1989, was soon lost in a forest of other (mostly political and economic) banners. The moral flag even began to appear embarrassing, not only because the time of flag-waving had passed so quickly, but also because the Church itself was unable to hold its ranks together, and its words were not followed by sufficiently tangible and credible actions.

After forty years of persecutions, the Church was in a markedly weak state when it faced the mountain of new tasks in the new society, and it was not able to establish its priorities and take advantage of its new possibilities. The believers and the sympathizers who expected inspiring personalities at key positions in the Church were disappointed by a procession of tired bureaucrats who lacked the magnanimity, vision, and creativity necessary to prepare the Church for the coming decade. A perfunctory patching-up of the institution of the Church began without any debate about the need to adapt to the changed conditions. Nor did the Church fully appreciate the role of the media in a free society, and soon—instead of a subject of inspiration or dialogue partner in the media—the Church became a curious object of marginal interest, occasional scandal, and, sometimes, a whipping boy.

The discussion surrounding the restitution of Church property in the Czech Republic has become a smoke screen obscuring the real question of the role and influence of the Church in a free society. (A similar situation has emerged in Poland with the debate over abortion.) The restitution problem—particularly the question of whether the Cathedral in Prague Castle is a national landmark or a Roman Catholic church—has been manipulated by the political parties and vulgarized by the media to such a degree that the awakened emotions and prejudices have made it impossible to address the essential question.

Sociological research on the attitudes of the Czech people indicates that in the first four years of freedom confidence in the Church fell rapidly and the number of declared Catholics declined by almost one-half. But at the same time the number of declared atheists also declined by one-third. The crisis in the Church is not a crisis in religion.

The Church should most certainly make every effort to seek out the causes of its own decline, but it should spend no less energy on the crisis of atheism. We cannot glibly interpret our own crisis only as a result of secularizing, consumer, and materialist influences from the West. We must not allow our disappointment in Post-Communist Man, who has turned his back to us, to hastily label him as godless.

My three postmodern questioners among the students at Charles University—the fundamentalist, the syncretist, and the deconstructionist—each in his own way represents a portion of post-Communist Czech society. In falling away from the Church during the years since the "Velvet Revolution," they did not become the Communist or even pre-Communist Enlightenment atheists we theologians too often assume we are addressing. Though the model of the Church as defending the ancient truths of faith against the attacks of modern atheism may have been the correct model during the years of Communist persecution, the contemporary, post-Communist Czech Church continues to maintain the model in massively changed times. In doing so, it misses the best lesson the revolution against communism taught us, that—as John Paul II has consistently emphasized—the Christian Church is the true bulwark for modern political liberties. Beyond that, the Church also, in mistaking its situation, misses its only opportunity in centuries to reclaim the Czech people for its own. FT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Islam Partially Perceived

Bernard Lewis

THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE MODERN ISLAMIC WORLD. Edited by JOHN L. ESPOSITO. *Oxford University Press. Four volumes, 1,920 pp. $395.*

How does one review a four-volume encyclopedia? One could, of course, earn one's reviewer's fee the old-fashioned way, by reading it all from start to finish and then comparing it to similar works on other subjects and dissimilar works on the same subject. But this way of reviewing is not only old-fashioned; it is being replaced by another, rather more expeditious method. This consists of making a careful examination of the book jacket blurb, table of contents, preface, and other introductory matter, studying and using the index, sampling and reading selected pages *en diagonale*, and relating the results to the putative origins and imputed purposes of the author.

In reviewing an encyclopedia, the new method—apart from the last point—even has some advantages. What, after all, does the reader of the review want to know about a work of reference? Some of the questions are obvious. Is it authoritative—that is to say, well-informed, sound, scholarly, and reflecting an up-to-date knowledge of the facts, the sources, the issues, and the debates? Is it objective? That is to say, does it give different views on disputed questions and avoid partisan or polemical statements? Some modern schools of epistemology would consider this aim impossible, noxious, and, at best, hypocritical, and would insist on the essentially partisan character even of dictionaries—perhaps especially of dictionaries. Another question, important in judging a work of reference—is it comprehensive yet balanced? That is to say, does it include all that should be included, exclude what is not relevant, and maintain a proper balance of topics and of the length and manner at which the various topics are treated?

An encyclopedia defined by a religion raises these questions in an acute form. There are a number of such encyclopedias in existence, Catholic, Jewish, and other. But the Catholic and Jewish encyclopedias were sponsored, edited, and largely written by Catholics and Jews, and are primarily intended to be consulted and read by Catholics and Jews. This one is in a different category. As with the earlier *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, published in Leiden in two editions under the aegis of the International Union of Academies, Islam defines its topic, not its auspices. It is published by the Oxford University Press. The editors, consultants, and advisors listed on the masthead contain a minority who can be identified by their names as Muslims—though in fairness it should be added that some of the others yield nothing to Muslims in their zeal for Islamic values and their sensitivity to Muslim concerns. There is a substantial Muslim representation among the contributors, as well as some whom one might designate, borrowing the language of another religion, as "Muslims of Grace."

From this it will be clear that, like its predecessor, this is an encyclopedia about Islam, not a Muslim or an Islamic encyclopedia.

In a work of this kind, there are several possible approaches. One might be described as academic or, better, scholarly, in purpose: that is to say, offering up-to-date information and guidance on the state of knowledge and opinion among specialists in the field. The Leiden *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, like the Pauly-Wissowa *Encyclopedia of Classical Antiquity* on which it is modeled, is manifestly of this kind. Contributors to such an encyclopedia are asked to support their articles with references to original sources and to scholarly literature in all the major languages. It is taken for granted that, whatever their own religious and other allegiances may be, they will aim at objectivity in their expositions and give adequate representation to viewpoints other than their own both in the articles and—no less important—in the bibliographies. They are not required to present a Muslim point of view on issues, but they are expected to reflect that point of view accurately and to do so with a decent regard for Muslim sensitivity.

A second approach is what one might call the topical and practical, that of the many popular encyclopedias, mostly in one volume, which aim at supplying quick and accessible guidance, on topics of current importance, for the undergraduate, high school, journalistic, and political reader. Such articles are addressed to the general public rather than to the practicing or aspiring scholar. They contain few if any references to original sources and their bibliographies are mainly English, with perhaps an occasional reference in French.

A third method might be described as polemical or partisan—according to the new epistemology, this is

BERNARD LEWIS *is Cleveland Dodge Professor of Near Eastern Studies Emeritus at Princeton University. His latest book,* The Middle East: Two Thousand Years from the Rise of Christianity to the Present Day, *is scheduled for publication by Simon & Schuster in May.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

indeed the only form of scholarship, though it may be disguised in various ways. A variant of this, no longer as popular as it was, but still widely adopted, is the apologetic—the desire by some Muslims, and also some non-Muslims, to present Islam in terms likely to win the approval of the non-Muslim and, more particularly, the Western reader and to omit or at least gloss over those aspects that would obstruct this aim.

Finally, for those dealing with a religion or a culture other than their own, there is the currently fashionable approach that might perhaps best be described as deferential. This sometimes leads Christian and Jewish writers to discuss Muslim beliefs and practices with a cautious respect they would never accord to the sanctities of their own or each other's religions. This approach is not always as acceptable as its practitioners appear to think. Many representatives of non-Western cultures see it as an insulting form of condescension—Westerners judging them by a standard lower than their own and even treating them as cases of diminished responsibility.

These so-called sympathizers who rise to defend or excuse every tyranny that prevails or social evil that persists in an Arab or Islamic country are, in effect, saying, "We would not for one moment tolerate this in our own country, but it is good enough for you, and is probably all that you are capable of achieving." Those who really study—and therefore respect—Islamic history and civilization are at once more critical, more compassionate, and more hopeful.

All these different approaches are represented in the *Oxford Encyclopedia*, both among the personalities listed on the masthead and among the many contributors. Sometimes, indeed, the different approaches are combined in the treatment of a single topic.

Short of reading the entire encyclopdia—a herculean task from which it seems even the editors have recoiled—choice, quality, and length can be judged only by sampling. A reading of a considerable number of articles—some on selected key topics, others chosen at random—reveals an astonishing range of quality, from outstandingly good to absurdly bad. Some signs of editorial control are manifest. Several of the more scholarly articles are still visibly bleeding from the cuts that must have been inflicted on them to fit them into the framework. Some of these articles are important, original contributions to scholarship, and it is to be hoped that their authors will publish them elsewhere at greater length with appropriate documentation.

The task of reviewing the selection and balance of topics has been made easier by the editors, who have thoughtfully provided what they call a "synoptic outline of contents," in which the entries are arranged and listed in "conceptual categories." These include history and geography, schools of thought, mysticism, religious belief, religious practice, Islamic law, theology, philosophy and ideology, politics (dynastic states, political and religious roles, political concepts and terms), economics, culture and society (personal life, community life, arts and literature, science and medicine, communications, popular religion), Islamic studies, institutions, organizations, movements, biographies.

The last category, arranged by countries, provides a convenient starting point. Under the heading "Egypt," thirty biographies are listed. In contrast, there are eight for Algeria, five each for Iraq and Pakistan, four each for Indonesia, Morocco, and the entire USSR and its successor states, three each for Syria, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon, two each for Libya and the Sudan, one each for Afghanistan, Malaysia, Tunisia, and Senegal, and none for Jordan or for any of the states of Arabia other than the Saudi Kingdom. There are sixteen each for Iran and Turkey, the latter divided into twelve for the Ottoman Empire and four for the Turkish Republic.

Few would dispute the primacy of Egypt in the Arab world. Many might also concede its primacy in the Muslim world, but this is surely overdoing it.

The selection of persons honored with individual biographical articles is a good indication of the balance between countries and within countries, as also by gender, occupation, outlook, and achievement. So, too, of course is the treatment accorded to these figures. Islamic militants (popularly known as "fundamentalists") are prominently featured, and they are accorded sympathetic or, at least, cautious treatment. Thus, of four biographies accorded the Turkish Republic, two are of Islamic militants. For Tunisia, the only biography is that of an Islamic militant leader now living in exile. The somewhat longer list for Egypt includes Sheikh Omar Abd al-Rahman, recently convicted in New York for his role in the bombing of the World Trade Center; it does not include Anwar Sadat. Literature receives scant attention: the Nobel Prize-winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz, one the greatest Arabic writers of this century, is missing, as are most other Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and other writers.

There are other oddities. The three names listed under "Palestine" consist of the Persian sectary Baha' Allah, who spent his last years in Acre, a Palestinian professor who taught at Temple University in Philadelphia, and the famous Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni. Astonishingly, neither Yasir Arafat nor his predecessor as head of the PLO, Ahmad al-Shuqayri, is listed.

The representation for Turkey may serve as an example of the somewhat idiosyncratic selection process. Of the three Young Turk pashas, Enver is the hero of a short article; his colleagues, Talat and Jemal, are both missing. Of the four from the Republic, two are statesmen—Kemal Atatürk and Turgut

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Özal. No one would dispute the importance of these two figures, but one wonders why some others, such as Ismet Inönü, are missing. The other two Turks consist of a politician and a poet. The politician, Erbakan, is the leader of the Turkish Islamist Party and presumably qualifies for that reason, while all other Turkish politicians since the establishment of the Republic are excluded. The choice of the poet is even more remarkable, as is also the treatment. Necip Fazil Kisakürek certainly ranks as an important figure among modern Turkish poets. But one could name several others of equal or greater stature who do not appear. He qualifies, presumably, because of his religious writings and activities. The article dealing with him is scholarly and well-informed but suffers from a recurring flaw of the encyclopedia—the tendency to understate or omit anything unpleasant or likely to antagonize the modern Western reader. A treatment of Necip Fazil Kisakürek should include some discussion of his fascination with French boulevard fascism and his failed attempt to create an Ottoman royalist equivalent of the Action Française. It might also include at least some reference to his espousal of the Axis cause during World War II and perhaps also to his rather un-Islamic personal way of life.

The inclusion or exclusion of heads of states and heads of government is difficult to understand. The listing for Egypt includes Nasser; it does not include any other modern Egyptian ruler. The listing for Iran includes the two shahs of the Pahlavi dynasty and, of course, the Ayatollah Khomeini. Pakistan has the late Mohammad Ali Jinnah, one of the two names for Libya is Qaddafi, while the Sudan has two biographies, a former prime minister, Sadiq al-Mahdi, and the Islamic militant power behind the throne, Hasan al-Turabi. Saudi Arabia has two kings and the founder of the Wahhabi order, while Syria and Iraq are represented only by (mostly religious) intellectuals. Hafiz al-Asad and Saddam Hussein and their predecessors in both countries are absent. The Hashimites fare particularly badly. The Sharif Hussein of the Hijaz qualifies, but King Faysal of Iraq and Kings Abdullah and Hussein of Jordan are all absent. Jordan contributes no biographies at all, though one would have thought that, even apart from its kings, some of its statesmen and scholars deserve a place alongside their colleagues in surrounding countries. The one Tunisian is Ghannushi, an exiled militant leader. There is no article on Bourguiba. Similarly, the one Afghan to achieve a biographical article is the militant leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Had this been an *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, there might have been some justification for such choices, though the earlier encyclopedia of that name includes a much wider range of biographies. But this is an encyclopedia of "the modern Islamic world," not of Islam. The result is a portrait gallery of that world in which militants outnumber and outrank all others.

The balance by country articles is somewhat better but still reveals some strange gaps. France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, which all have significant Muslim populations, have articles devoted to them, as do Australia and New Zealand, which according to various estimates quoted in the article together have between a hundred thousand and a quarter of a million Muslims. But there is no article on Russia, which has more Muslims than all of Western Europe combined. The six former Soviet republics with majority Muslim populations in Transcaucasia and Central Asia have short separate articles devoted to them but between them have only four men worthy of biographical notice. The Muslim peoples within the Russian Federation, such as the Bashkir, Chechen, Ingush, Circassians, and Tatars, have no articles. The first three do not even appear in the index. Most surprising of all, under the heading "Palestine" there is only a cross-reference to "West Bank and Gaza."

There is no article on Bosnia, just some paragraphs in the subsection on the "former Yugoslavia" in a general article on the Balkan states. In contrast, the "Nation of Islam" is treated at length in four and a half pages—slightly more than Bangladesh and slightly less than Indonesia. Elijah Mohammed and Malcolm X are both accorded biographical articles.

A curiosity is that while there are many articles on countries, there are very few on cities and these are limited to places of religious significance. There are articles on Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Qom, Najaf, and Mashhad but none on Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Istanbul, Isfahan, and other great centers of Islamic civilization.

The articles on movements and ideas reveal similar inconsistencies. Thus the article "Watan" indicates correctly that this term was used in "traditional Islamic culture . . . to indicate a person's place of birth or residence . . . [and] redefined in the nineteenth century to embrace the meaning attached to the concept of 'patrie' or 'fatherland' in European languages." The article deals briefly with the latter meaning and advises the reader to "see also Arab nationalism; nation." One's first reaction is that the writer (or editor) forgot to insert cross-references to other nationalist movements in Islamic countries and that there would also be articles, at the very least, on Turkish and Iranian nationalism. Astonishingly, there is no article on either of these nor is there any general article on patriotism, a major movement of ideas in the Islamic world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is of course related to nationalism, but it is not the same thing and it surely deserves separate treatment.

A work of reference dealing with the modern Islamic world must inevitably touch on a number of highly controversial questions, some of them relat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing to conflicts between Muslims and others, some of them—the more delicate and important—to conflicts of interests and ideas within and between Muslim countries. A simple and effective method of dealing with controversial issues is just to ignore them. For conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims, the choice is straightforward: one takes the Muslim side or, if that is not feasible, one omits the question altogether. The choice is much more difficult where the dispute is between Muslim countries or factions. This, too, can be dealt with by simple omission. Thus, ethnic minorities in Muslim countries are, for the most part, totally ignored. There are no articles on Berbers or Kurds; the former do not even appear in the index. The religious and ethnic minorities in the Sudan and in Iran are similarly invisible. Slavery is the subject of a good though short article, but the slave trade, concubinage, and even abolition receive no separate treatment.

In the same spirit, there are articles on capitalism, socialism, and communism, but none on fascism, despite the unmistakable influence that fascist ideas exercised in some nationalist circles in the Middle East as elsewhere in the 1930s and early 1940s. In contrast, other delicate issues of a less political or nonpolitical character receive franker treatment. Thus there are articles on family, family law, marriage and divorce, mut'ah (marriage for a limited term), polygyny and puberty rites, sexuality, and even on clitoridectomy and abortion. There are several articles on the position of women in law and in society.

In these days of interfaith dialogue, or at least debate, there are inevitably substantial articles on Muslim-Christian dialogue, Muslim-Jewish dialogue, Christianity and Islam, Judaism and Islam. These and other similar articles are written by Muslim, Christian, and Jewish contributors reflecting different points of view, supported at times by different bibliographies.

The mention of bibliography raises another form of diversity. Some contributors offer a judicious choice of books and articles to enable the reader to pursue the subject further; others, especially on political topics, offer a list of items selected and designed to buttress their own view. Some show intimate familiarity with the existing literature; some deplorable ignorance. There seems to be no editorial policy regarding bibliographies. Some are very short, some very long; most are limited to works in English, though some include titles in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and other Islamic languages. French titles appear infrequently, German even more so, in spite of the extensive and valuable literature in both languages. In compensation, there is a reference to a work in Dutch in an article contributed by a Dutch scholar. As is usual in works of reference, most contributors give due prominence to their own writings. Some go further and confine their listings to the works of like-minded friends and colleagues. Some do try to give representation to differing points of view on both scholarly and political issues, but this is rather rare.

In an encyclopedia of the modern Islamic world, one would expect the authors to show some knowledge of the previous work on the subject. Some contributors have indeed both used and cited the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Some have done one or the other. Some again have done neither and thus fallen into errors of commission and omission that could easily have been avoided.

As noted, literature on the whole receives rather inadequate treatment in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. There are substantial articles on Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literature as well as on literature in Urdu, Malay, Indonesian, and, briefly, some of the languages of Central Asia. There seems to be little or nothing about the literatures of the numerous other Muslim peoples. Nor are there separate articles on literary forms and genres—such as fiction, drama, poetry—all of which have gone through interesting and important changes and developments in Islamic lands in the modern period. Even major writers in the major languages do not figure in the lists of biographies.

Some attention is given to topical issues. Thus, for example, what is listed as "Rushdie affair" has an article to itself of almost three pages. The bibliography, though long, does not include the important article by Sadiq al-'Azm. Nor does there appear to be any discussion, here or elsewhere, of the issue raised in this and some other cases, of the offense known as "insulting the Prophet." A discussion of the significance of this offense in the context of Muslim law and theology would surely be of value.

There have been great struggles between Christendom and Islam in the past: the Muslim conquest and conversion of the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, until then part of Christendom; the battle for Spain that began with the Moorish conquest and ended eight centuries later with the completion of the Christian Reconquest; the repeated attempts of the Crusaders to reconquer the Holy Land, ending in their final defeat and departure; the rapid advance of the Tatars and Turks in east and southeast Europe and their long drawn-out retreat; the Christian counterattack in Russia and Iberia, pursuing their former conquerors and masters into their homelands and establishing a European imperial domination over most of the lands of Islam. With the dismantling of the Soviet Union, the last of the European empires to dominate Muslim lands, that phase too has come to an end, and a new era of peaceful coexistence is possible.

There are still some on both sides who see world history in terms of a holy war between believers and unbelievers, in which struggle is a divine command-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment and victory a divine promise. Even among modern Westerners, no longer inclined to see the course of events in such terms, this perception is nevertheless encouraged by repeated stories in the media of militant Muslims and of what they say and do.

Anyone with even a moderate knowledge of Islam knows that most Muslims are neither militant nor violent. This more balanced perception of the Muslim religion and of those who profess it will not be encouraged, either among non-Muslims or among the new and growing population of English-speaking Muslims, by an encyclopedia that gives such disproportionate emphasis to militant Islam and its practitioners. FT

After a Dream of Clare and Francis of Assisi

Alone
at the edge of the sea

he sets the stone in place. Always

the last stone
the stone that has fallen

the broken stone for which there is no use.

His shoulders and the hills are a community now,
when he walks

his shadow loses itself in the grass.

Comes to a crossroads and spins till his bones
fall down in a heap.

From wind and sparrow

he gets his bearings;
the horizons pass over him like clouds.

A stranger gives him his cloak, from its holes
he patches together a family.

A neighbor brings him his bowl, he knows
the ways of clay.

The sun sends down its light, so much seed
on good field and bad.

The moon floats in his eyes,
he is learning to see in the night.

The earth has taken him in like a rain,

and when he puts out his hands to the fire,
it runs under his skin like water.

This was her gift, she knew the touch of his hands.

Which is the lighter, the heavier,
the earth that gives, the earth that receives?

He has asked to be planted in the poorest of soil,

like a crop
she watches his days flower and season and fall.

This is her betrothed;

hard the bed that will have no roof
whose blankets are leaves that fall like coins

whose nights stretch like a moon

that grows full only to empty its pockets for nothing.
Who is the richer,

the poorer, the bride, the bridegroom?

Steven Lautermilch

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books In Review

The Marrying Kind

VIRTUALLY NORMAL: AN ARGUMENT ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY. By ANDREW SULLIVAN. *Knopf. 209 pp. $22.*

***Reviewed by* Elizabeth Kristol**

WHAT WOULD life be like if we were not allowed to marry? That is the question at the heart of Andrew Sullivan's first book, *Virtually Normal.* In a sharp departure from the brash tone of the *New Republic,* the political weekly he edits, Sullivan here takes a sober look at the public debate over homosexuality and offers a moving, often lyrical, plea for the legalization of same-sex marriage.

Virtually Normal should be of special interest to conservatives. For one thing, Sullivan has occasionally described himself as such. Second, he is a Roman Catholic who has always taken matters of faith and the teachings of his Church seriously. Finally, Sullivan's thesis hinges on the claim that legalizing homosexual marriage would have a conservatizing influence on society as a whole.

Sullivan begins his book with a poignant memoir of growing up gay. He describes the pain and embarrassment he experienced in his struggles to come to terms with his homosexuality; his determination, once his desires became undeniable, to remain celibate in accordance with his faith; the explosive mix of joy and confusion he experienced when he had his first homosexual experience at age twenty-three.

From this autobiographical opening, Sullivan turns to what he considers the four prevailing attitudes toward homosexuality. These range from the authoritarian "prohibitionists," who consider homosexuality an abomination warranting legal punishment, to the anarchistic "liberationists," who reject the very distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality as merely semantics. In between lie the "conservatives," who combine private tolerance of homosexuals with public disapproval of homosexuality; and the "liberals," who speak a language of victimhood and look to the state to enforce private tolerance.

SULLIVAN ANALYZES each of these attitudes and concludes that they have all proven ineffective in developing a workable public position on homosexuality. Instead, he offers a political remedy that he claims will transcend the divisiveness. His solution is unique, Sullivan explains, in focusing exclusively on the actions of the "public neutral state." The state—but only the state—would have to treat homosexuals and heterosexuals with perfect equality. This would mean repealing antisodomy laws, permitting homosexuals to serve in the military on the same terms as heterosexuals, including lessons about homosexuality in public school sex-education programs, and legalizing homosexual marriage and divorce.

Sullivan claims that, since he does not seek to bar discrimination against homosexuals in the private sector, there would be "no cures or reeducation, no wrenching private litigation, no political imposition of tolerance; merely a political attempt to enshrine formal public equality, whatever happens in the culture and society at large." This solution, he adds, has the virtue of respecting religion; as part of the "private sector," churches can take whatever positions they like on homosexuality.

Is there such a thing as a purely "public" solution to the question of homosexuality that leaves the "private" realm untouched? We know Sullivan does not really believe this, because his entire argument in favor of legalized homosexual marriage hinges on the recognition that public law is the most powerful tool for shaping individual attitudes. The core assumption of *Virtually Normal*—and a compelling one, too—is that the *absence* of public laws granting homosexuals full equality has helped create a culture in which homosexuality is considered dirty or sinful, and in which homosexuals are deemed incapable of loving each other with dignity and commitment. As Sullivan rightly observes, the surest way to reverse the trickle-down effect of this message would be to stand the current law on its head. Far from being a simple matter of what the "neutral liberal state should do in public matters," then, public law is for Sullivan the crucial tool of social transformation.

THUS SULLIVAN notes that the existence of gay marriage would be an "unqualified social good" for homosexuals in providing role models for children coming to terms with their sexuality. As gay marriage "sank into the subtle background consciousness of a culture, its influence would be felt quietly but deeply among gay children. For them, at last, there would be some kind of future; some older faces to apply to their unfolding lives, some language in which their identity could be properly discussed, some rubric by which it could be explained—not in terms of sex, or sexual practices, or bars, or subterranean activity, but in terms of their future life stories, their potential loves, their eventual chance at some kind of constructive happiness."

The influence of gay marriage, Sullivan believes, would not only make it easier to grow up gay, but would actually change how adult homosexuals conduct their lives. He acknowledges that many homosexual men are self-centered and promiscuous. According to Sullivan, though, "there is nothing inevitable at all about a homosexual leading a depraved life." Homosexuals simply lack the proper "social incentives" not to be depraved. Once same-sex marriage is the law, Sullivan predicts, most homosexuals would enter into marriage "with as much (if not more) commitment as heterosexuals."

ELIZABETH KRISTOL, *a writer living in Cincinnati, has published articles and reviews in* Commentary, *the* Washington Post, *and other publications.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But is that really true? Sullivan does not address the fact that most lesbians, who grow up facing the same stigmas and the same lack of role models as male homosexuals, live conventional lives and form long-term monogamous relationships. Why, with gay men, are quasi-marriages the exception to the rule? On this key point, Sullivan sends us a mixed message.

On the one hand, *Virtually Normal* presents a very sanitized picture of male homosexual life; there are no details of the gay subculture to repel heterosexual readers and make them less amenable to Sullivan's political proposals. Even Sullivan's chapter on "The Liberationists" does not include those we have come to associate with that term (the strident gay-rights activists or flamboyant gay liberationists) but focuses instead on a ragtag group of theoreticians influenced by French philosophy. Sullivan makes every effort to portray homosexuals as sharing the same emotions, longings, and dreams as heterosexuals.

Yet in the closing pages of his book, Sullivan undermines his own argument. In the final chapter he returns to the opening chapter's personal tone and reflects on some of the strengths he sees in the contemporary homosexual community. He asserts that "homosexual relationships, even in their current, somewhat eclectic form, may contain features that could nourish the broader society as well." The "solidity and space" of gay relationships "are qualities sometimes lacking in more rote, heterosexual couplings." Moreover, the "openness of the contract makes it more likely to survive than many heterosexual bonds." As Sullivan puts it, there is "more likely to be a greater understanding of the need for extramarital outlets between two men than between a man and a woman; and again, the lack of children gives gay couples greater freedom."

Sullivan suggests that gay marriage would do well to retain some of this "openness":

> I believe strongly that marriage should be made available to everyone, in a politics of strict public neutrality. But within this model, there is plenty of scope for cultural difference. There is something baleful about the attempt of some gay conservatives to educate homosexuals and lesbians into an uncritical acceptance of a stifling model of heterosexual normality. The truth is, homosexuals are not entirely normal; and to flatten their varied and complicated lives into a single, moralistic model is to miss what is essential and exhilarating about their otherness.

Rote? *Stifling*? *Moralistic*? These are strange epithets to come upon in the final pages of a book whose goal is to convince readers that homosexuals want to marry and deserve to marry; that homosexual love is as dignified as heterosexual love; that it is inhumane not to allow the dignity of this love to find fruition in marriage; that marriage is so venerable an institution that it is single-handedly capable of leading men out of lives of empty promiscuity into unions of commitment and fidelity. Suddenly we learn, almost as an afterthought, that the institution of marriage may have to change to accommodate the special needs of homosexuals.

At first glance, it seems odd that Sullivan would be so eager to support an institution for which he seems to have serious reservations. But Sullivan is more interested in marriage as a symbol than as an institution. On its most fundamental level, *Virtually Normal* is not about politics or ideas, but about emotions: Sullivan's overwhelming priority is to spare future generations the suffering he experienced. His argument for gay marriage is memorable, not as a cry for equal access to the covenant of marriage, but as a fervent hope that some day the stigma may be removed from homosexuality.

Sullivan is probably right that his proposals would make it easier for young homosexuals to accept themselves. But it could make adolescence a rougher time for everyone: children confronted with two equally legitimate images of adult sexual roles would be rudderless for many years, and no one knows what personal or social toll would result from this prolonged period of sexual confusion.

Nor does Sullivan take seriously the question of how children would be raised by same-sex parents, and what long-term effects this upbringing might have on their emotional and sexual development. Sullivan addresses only one sentence to this complicated subject: "There is no evidence that shows any deleterious impact on a child brought up by two homosexual parents." He does not discuss the practical implications of his reform for foster care, adoption, child-custody suits, and the like.

And while Sullivan would presumably not consider this a social

Highest prices paid for scholarly religious books

We purchase collections, large and small, throughout the United States and in Canada and Great Britain.

We routinely outbid other booksellers for the books we especially want: scholarly books, in any language, in such areas as theology, philosophy, biblical studies, canon law, ecclesiastical music and art and architecture, patristic and mediaeval studies, religious biography and lives of the saints, prayer books and liturgical texts, etc etc etc.

Loome Theological Booksellers
320 North Fourth Street
Stillwater, Minnesota 55082
612-430-1092

And yes, we sell books too. We have the largest stock of secondhand and out-of-print religious books in the English-speaking world. If you know what titles you want, send us a list in writing. If you want one of our occasional catalogues, just ask.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"cost," policymakers would have to grapple with the fact that legalizing gay marriage would probably increase the number of homosexuals overall. Any societal influence that is strong enough to be "felt deeply" by children who are destined to become homosexual is also going to be felt by children whose sexual orientation is less certain. Even if Sullivan is correct in guessing that an individual's sexual orientation is firmly established by the age of five or six (a debatable point), this would hardly mean that sexual orientation is immune from social influence.

FINALLY, as many of Sullivan's "conservative" thinkers point out, placing gay marriage on an equal footing with heterosexual marriage might end up weakening marriage as an institution. Sullivan offers a particularly unsatisfying response to this concern. Because homosexuals "have no choice but to be homosexual," he declares, "they are not choosing that option over heterosexual marriage; and so they are not sending any social signals that heterosexual family life should be denigrated."

This answer misses the point of the pro-family argument. Conservatives do not fear that legalizing gay marriage would send heterosexuals the message that they are settling for second best. Conservatives are concerned that the more society broadens the definition of "marriage"—and some would argue that the definition has already been stretched to the breaking point—the less seriously it will be taken by everyone.

If *Virtually Normal* is any indication, this fear is warranted. When all is said and done, Sullivan is not just interested in admitting a new group of people to marriage (although that would be revolutionary enough). He wants to redefine marriage to accommodate a particular lifestyle. Sullivan's willingness to jettison the monogamous aspect of marriage (and what more important aspect is there?), and his suggestion that heterosexuals should rethink their own "moralistic" and "stifling" notions of marriage: these are the "social signals" that worry conservatives. In short, Sullivan's book beautifully engages our sympathy for the difficulties homosexuals encounter in our society, but it is unpersuasive in its argument that gay marriage would be a conservatizing force.

The Gathered Community

AMERICAN CONGREGATIONS. Edited by JAMES P. WIND and JAMES W. LEWIS. *University of Chicago Press.* Volume 1: *Portraits of Twelve Religious Communities. 736 pp., $34.95.* Volume 2: *Perspectives in the Study of Congregations. 288 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by **Nancy T. Ammerman**

THESE TWO volumes are the result of a project, housed from 1987-91 at the University of Chicago, that brought together historians, sociologists, and theologians to understand the role of congregations in American history. The resulting conversation—documented here in twelve congregational histories and eight interpretive essays—will make a major contribution to how debates about American religion will be framed in the years ahead.

Brooks Holifield, in a historical overview in the second volume that should become a classic in American history, shows how the number of congregations and the number of members have grown enormously over our history, while the percentage of active participants in local religious life has probably remained rather constant. With 30 to 40 percent of the adult population regularly involved, congregations are the primary place beyond the family where Americans gain a sense of identity and belonging.

Among their many contributions, editors James Wind and James Lewis provide compact historical accounts of twelve very different congregations that represent the ever-growing diversity of the American religious scene. Fittingly, we start with Center Church in New Haven, a congregation that dates to 1638 and the Puritans, but that struggles to survive as a worshipping community today. Then we head south for a look at the Mt. Hebron (Southern Baptist) congregation established on the Alabama frontier in the early nineteenth century. Its rural evangelical ethos has survived to this day, although it is threatened by the encroaching Birmingham suburbs. In a similar time and place, Jewish settlers on the Ohio River frontier recognized their need for a place to worship and founded K. K. Bene Israel (later Rockdale Temple) in Cincinnati. It grew to be one of the leading congregations in the local community and in the national movement of Reform Judaism. A third early-nine-

NANCY T. AMMERMAN *recently joined the faculty of the Center for Social and Religious Research at Hartford Seminary. She is the author of* Congregation and Community, *forthcoming later this year from Rutgers University Press.*

Calvin College
Faculty Seminars in Christian Scholarship
C. Stephen Evans, Director

♦ **THE SEMINARS: June 17 - July 26, 1996** ♦

TRADITION AND LITERARY STUDY
Donald Marshall
Professor of English
University of Illinois-Chicago

POSTMODERN PHILOSOPHY AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT
Merold Westphal
Professor of Philosophy
Fordham University

Persons who teach at liberal arts colleges and untenured faculty at research universities are eligible to participate. Applicants must hold an earned Ph.D. The Faculty Summer Seminar program has been made possible by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

For more information or to apply, contact:
Sandra van Kley, Calvin College
3201 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Fax: 616-957-8551 Phone: 616-957-8558
E-Mail: svankley@calvin.edu

Deadline for Applications: February 15, 1996

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

teenth-century congregation, Bethel A.M.E. in Baltimore, reminds us that congregations provided arenas in which otherwise oppressed peoples could express their discontents and organize to overcome them.

BY THE MIDDLE of the nineteenth century, new elements were being added to the American religious scene, among the most dramatic the creation of a kingdom of Latter Day Saints in the Great Salt Lake Basin. One of the first wards to be established as Salt Lake City grew beyond its original borders was the Sugar House Ward, whose story is told here. Never anything other than typical, according to the authors of this account, Sugar House continues today as an extended family for its members and a precinct of the kingdom.

While Mormons were establishing their empire in the west, religion in the east was changing with the influx of European immigrants. St. Boniface Parish was established in 1864 in Chicago as home to new German Catholic arrivals. The Poles were not far behind, although St. Boniface long resisted their influence. But a century later, both Germans and Poles had given way to new Hispanic immigrants at St. Boniface. St. Peter's in San Francisco was a half century behind St. Boniface in founding, but the transformations were similar. Beginning as an Irish church in an Irish parish enclave, it is today mostly Hispanic. Yet, St. Peter's is different from St. Boniface. The latter has put most of its energies into religious and cultural preservation and transmission, while St. Peter's has been an active political and economic organizing center.

If St. Peter's represents the interests of the workers and immigrants, Fourth Presbyterian in Chicago, also founded at mid-century, has always been home to the owners and the natives. With Cyrus McCormick as one of its dominant early influences, the congregation has always attempted to combine the atmosphere of an elite club with massive programs of philanthropy and community outreach.

The final four congregations in this volume have shorter histories. The Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, in Baltimore, was founded in 1906, and has only recently begun to face the problems of Americanized congregants. The Lebanese Muslims arriving in Lac La Biche in western Canada only began to gather for Friday prayers in the middle of this century. They have built a mosque, but their lives are still strongly shaped by the Lebanese villages from which they have come and the Arab and Muslim identities they seek to preserve. Most of the Hindus who worship at the Swaminarayan Temple in Glen Ellyn, north of Chicago, are part of the "new ethnic" immigration of the post-1965 era. Their temple—a former VFW hall—is the center for ritual activity, weekly communal meals, and a cycle of Hindu festival events that keeps them connected to the religious traditions of their native India.

The final congregation in this collection introduces us to immigrants of a different sort—the youthful dropouts of the sixties who eventually found their way into the Jesus movement and the "soft Pentecostalism" of Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa. This mega-church, where twenty-five thousand people pass through the "campus" each week, has become the harbinger of evangelical adaptation for the future. Even with three hundred or so affiliated congregations throughout the nation and overseas, Calvary Chapel remains firmly congregational in polity, refusing to organize a denominational structure.

THE UNDERLYING ARGUMENT behind the project is difficult to discern. Implicit in the books is the contention that the congregation is the quintessentially American form of religious life *and* that congregations matter. They matter not only for the individuals in them, but also for the communities (and nation) in which they are located. Both of these contentions may seem commonplace, but they are not. Much of American religious history has been written as if there were no congregations—only movements, awakenings, great men, and theological fights. And when congregations have been noticed, they have been dismissed as irrelevant to public life, important only for whatever comfort they afford individuals, whatever compensatory opportunities they might provide for women, and whatever moral guidance they may provide in child-rearing.

Reading these historical accounts brings us again and again to the conclusion that congregations are far from "private" institutions (a point Martin Marty makes explicit in his essay in volume two). Many of them began *as* civic institutions, in times and places where religion and polity were not separate. But even in official separation, congregations provide the spaces (physical and otherwise) where public issues are debated, they form the character of those who take responsibility for public leadership, and they take on themselves the tasks of communal caring that must be borne by bodies bigger than the individual or family. They also represent the interests of people who have no other public voice.

On that point, these histories provide a valuable corrective to the larger stories we have told about American history. Religion is not as privatized or society as secular as we might believe if our perspective were only national. In other ways, these cases simply allow us to see the lived reality in the big trends. In paying attention to the particular, we catch glimpses of common patterns. It is not that the theological trends are not there or that women's work and child-rearing are not prominent among the functions of these congregations. But by looking at particular stories, each of those larger trends is seen differently.

For instance, in a number of cases the social gospel trends of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are seen in expansion of congregational programs to serve the community. The "institutional church" form for congregational life

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even transcends Protestantism to find expression in a place like Rockdale Temple or the Sugar House ward. In that same era, women's mission and reform societies of all sorts were thriving, and we see them intersecting with many of these congregations. Similarly, the presence of lay governing boards has been a fact of life for American congregations across traditions. While there may be higher ecclesial authorities limiting local power, priests, rabbis, and pastors of all sorts have to deal with the wishes of the members who form the voluntary corporation that is ultimately the congregation in the American system.

This voluntary, lay-led, congregational system of religion contrasts, of course, with the systems from which most Europeans came. In his essay in the second volume, Jay Dolan notes that American congregations (even Catholic ones) have developed this system out of the ideals of republicanism coupled with the pragmatic realities of inadequate numbers of priests. The result is what Stephen Warner calls in his essay "de facto congregationalism." He points out that even when the native tradition—as with Muslims and Hindus—does not emphasize a gathering to which members belong, immigrants nevertheless organize congregations when they get to this country. And others, already used to congregations and parishes but located in connectional or hierarchical denominations, nevertheless organize themselves in this country into bodies that each assume they should have some say over their own existence.

As VOLUNTARY human communities, congregations are a peculiar mix of sacred and secular. There is never any doubt, in reading the twelve case histories, that religious identity and observance is at the heart of why these congregations exist. People gather together because the congregation helps to connect them with their god. Daily Hindu worship is carried on in the temple as well as at home. Friday prayers for a Muslim congregation involve careful attention to washing and kneeling as well as to the prescribed Arabic prayers. Greek Orthodox icons and Fourth Presbyterian's stained glass remind worshippers of the larger story in which they are participating.

But equally important is the gathering itself. The congregation gives expression to its members' sense of their place in the community. They build buildings and hire pastors that befit their assumed station in life—witness the carefully decorated parlors in many church buildings. They wish to speak *their* language and celebrate the festivals of their own home culture. They prepare the foods they like and arrange to eat them with people to whom they feel loyal.

In the telling of these particular stories, we see the extent to which the life of a congregation is tied to the life of the community in which it is located. When a freeway is built or a new wave of immigrants arrives, congregations cannot carry on unchanged. As one generation passes from the scene and a new one assumes leadership, new challenges of assimilation are confronted. How much of the old language will be used? How will the community be defined?

Likewise, we see in these very particular stories recurring themes that describe the cycles of life in a human community—the mythic struggles of the pioneer days, the inevitable tensions between oldtimers and newcomers, the difficulty clergy encounter in introducing radical change (and yet the indelible stamp clergy seem to leave), the identity crisis of a "leading" congregation that realizes it has been pushed to the periphery, the pain of schism that seems almost always to lead to growth in both resulting congregations, the vital work done by women in tending to congregational life. Combined with Warner's excellent theoretical exposition, these portraits will give us sociologists plenty of data to enhance our understanding of the human religious gatherings found in congregations.

The fact that these gatherings are both human and religious is a subject reflected on by each of the theologians represented in the second volume. Langdon Gilkey calls for a new balance between the sort of "churchly" posture that allows congregations to be relevant to this world, along with the sort of "sectarian" posture that allows them to be prophetic, to draw on their connections with the holy to transcend the world as it has been given them.

Evangelium Vitae - Women and the Culture of Life

In his encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life)*, Pope John Paul II calls women to promote a "new feminism" in service to life.

What should the new feminism look like? And how are Catholic women, in particular, to help build it?

Women Affirming Life and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pro-Life Secretariat invite you to a two-day conference May 3 and 4, 1996 to search for answers to these questions.

Mary Ann Glendon, Keynote Speaker

For Conference Brochure Contact: Women Affirming Life
P. O. Box 35532
Brighton, MA 02135
Phone: 617-327-7626

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dorothy Bass calls on congregations to recognize that they both bear a long tradition and constantly contribute to its adaptation. The work of religious education is the work of maintaining that dialogue. The dialectic they call for is further illuminated in Robert Franklin's essay on the peculiar character of the Black Church—utterly rooted in the realities African Americans face, but always offering strategies of action and images of hope for transcending that world.

These theological reflections are an important addition to a conversation about congregations. Just as historians and sociologists formerly told the story of American history as if congregations did not exist, so theologians often spun out their ideas as if no living body of people were attempting to practice the faith. In giving us these case histories and a set of excellent interpretive essays, Wind and Lewis have reminded us that American religion must be understood in its particular, local, gathered, human forms. They remind us that congregations matter.

Beyond Pluralism

SALVATIONS: TRUTH AND DIFFERENCE IN RELIGION. By S. MARK HEIM. *Orbis. 248 pp. $19.95 paper.*

***Reviewed by* Paul J. Griffiths**

CHRISTIANS HAVE always been interested in the fact that there are many faithful practitioners of religions other than Christianity. Some are ignorant of Christianity; others prefer to remain non-Christian even when they do know of Christianity. These facts provide some special and difficult problems for Christians. What is to be said about the eternal destiny of these faithful non-Christians? About the truth of what is taught and advocated by them? About the attitudes that Christians should take toward them?

PAUL J. GRIFFITHS *is Associate Professor of Philosophy of Religion in the Divinity School at the University of Chicago.*

Serious thought about these questions is certainly not a new feature of Christian life. Early Christian intellectuals like Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen had to address it in the context of their attempts to justify the existence and validity of what was then a minority religion: they tried to show that Christianity preserved everything good in the religions and quasi-religions of their time, and that it also contained excellences not found in them. Later Eastern Christians, faced, like John of Damascus in the seventh century, with an aggressively expansionist Islam, had to account for the puzzling fact of this new religion in the face of the existence of what they took to be the matchless and final religion of Christianity. European Christians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had to account for the fact that the Christian world appeared ready to demonstrate with finality its superiority to the non-Christian world by conquering it militarily and economically. Could mass conversion and the Christianization of the earth be far behind? And Western Christians since the end of World War II have had to look back at all these earlier discussions and attempt a reconstrual of them in the light of guilt for association with colonialism, remorse for complicity in the horror of the Holocaust, and increasing doubt about the truth of Christianity's doctrinal claims in the harsh light of secularist rationalism.

THIS LAST situation has produced a flood of writing and talk in recent years on the questions raised for Christians by religious plurality. Much of this has argued for a broadly pluralistic response, which involves a number of claims. The first is that all religions (or at least all the "great world religions") are on a par. None is in any important respect superior to any other; their differences are only in religiously nonessential matters. The second claim is that to affirm the superiority of one religion over another is epistemologically dubious and morally disreputable—at best insular, at worst actively chauvinistic. These two claims imply a third, which is that it is possible to find a place outside any particular religious commitment from which to judge the validity of all such commitments.

Among the most prominent and vocal advocates of these responses have been John Hick and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, both Protestants, and Paul Knitter, a Roman Catholic. The pluralistic responses advocated by these men are not easily made compatible with orthodox Christianity—or indeed with the orthodoxy of any religion. Their promulgation has therefore prompted floods of discussion, much of it repetitive and unoriginal. S. Mark Heim's new book is neither of these things: it offers a careful critique of pluralist positions, shows that there are factors common to them all that make them impossible to sustain, and offers a response to the problem that stands a chance of being both coherent and acceptable to Christians.

Heim, a Christian who teaches at the Andover Newton School of Theology in Massachusetts, begins by isolating the conceptual problems at the heart of pluralism. The main difficulty is that pluralists are caught between an implicit need to provide arguments for the superiority of their own views about human nature and human destiny over traditional religious views, on the one hand, and an explicit commitment to principles that exclude the legitimacy of just such arguments, on the other. Pluralists want to check and rebuke Christian tendencies to be (as they see it) imperialist and condescending in their judgments about non-Christian religions, but in doing this they are themselves engaging in precisely the activity they wish to rebuke: they are chiding Christians for the falsehood and ethical dubiousness of Christian views. And this is a kind of fundamental contradiction that no system of thought can long sustain.

HEIM ALSO shows the connections between this unresolvable tension and the desire, deep in the hearts of most pluralists, to find a religion-free con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ceptual and ethical space to stand from which to judge the desirability and usefulness of all religious phenomena. This is a hope common to many Enlightenment thinkers. It is the hope for arguments in some sphere of human inquiry that are at once value-free and incontrovertible. Descartes and Spinoza, in their different ways, hoped for this in metaphysics, as Locke did in epistemology. This is the hope that, more than any other, has fueled the philosophical engines of modernity.

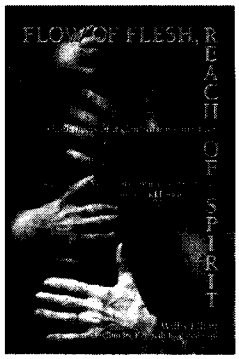
But the hope has failed, as Heim shows in his extended and useful discussion of the work of the philosopher Nicholas Rescher. Philosophy (Descartes and Locke notwithstanding) cannot provide arguments for its own epistemic values that do not already presuppose those values. You cannot, for instance, show that perception is a generally reliable means of producing knowledge without already assuming that it is. Foundationalism, in other words, is unrealizable. But this means that philosophers must accept that their enterprises are always and necessarily involved with commitments of an evaluative kind, and that these commitments are not themselves based either upon evidence or upon rationally conclusive argument. They must also accept that it is possible to do philosophy with different commitments of these kinds—different orientations, as Rescher and Heim put it—and that the orientation adopted will have significant effects upon how philosophy is done and what philosophical results are obtained. Accepting this state of affairs (which Rescher calls "orientational pluralism") involves the rejection of pluralism and its hopes. Any attempt to judge all religious phenomena from a religion-free place will necessarily fail.

But good though all this is, the really new thing about Heim's book is his application of the antifoundationalist critique to the advocates of pluralism and his use of it to construct a different response to the difficult questions of religious plurality. He wants a response to these questions that recognizes genuine and essential religious difference; that provides a conceptual place for the tendencies that religions have to make claims to unsurpassability and finality; and that allows the possibility that faithful adherents of one religion may learn from the details of the lives of faithful religious others, as well as be justified in confronting those others with argument and action when it seems to them that there is reason to do so. Heim thinks that an antifoundationalist orientational pluralism of Rescher's sort can do all this, and can also be acceptable to orthodox Christians.

HEIM'S POSITION amounts to a kind of religious particularism—in his case a Christian kind—that recognizes the fact and the possible value of other religious particularisms without trying to subsume them all into some grand religiously neutral theory. This way of thinking allows for the possibility that different religions may be deeply and genuinely different, offering their adherents competing goals that, however good each may be, are profoundly incompatible. Thus the title of Heim's book: "salvations," in the plural. He puts the matter this way: "Christians can consistently recognize that some traditions encompass religious ends which are real states of human transformation, distinct from that Christians seek"—which is to say that Christians can consistently recognize that there are (or may be) many different religious ends, many different salvations.

Being an orthodox Christian, Heim is careful to add that while Christians both can and should make such a judgment, they must add to it the judgment that such alternate non-Christian religious ends are subordinate to the Christian end, finally to be encompassed by it. This claim is integral to the grammar of the Christian account and cannot be abandoned without also abandoning that account. Heim's pluralist nonfoundationalist position allows him to say this with all the passion that an orthodox Christian needs while recognizing that non-Christians may say the same about the salvation their

FLOW OF FLESH, REACH OF SPIRIT



Thinksheets of a Contrarian Christian

Willis Elliott

Introduction by
Kenneth L. Woodward

"Dr. Elliott is a wise counselor and highly discerning observer of the shifting relations between religion and culture. He is a deeply Christian intellectual and witty gentleman whose judgments, both personal and professional, I treasure more highly on more subjects than those of anyone else."

— **Kenneth L. Woodward**
senior writer and religion editor,
Newsweek

"For every reader who applauds, another disavows. Stimulating, insightful, and provocative, this informal one-person think tank continues to challenge and leave its mark."

— **Carl F. H. Henry,** founding editor,
Christianity Today

"I always find Willis Elliott's angle of vision revealing. . . . He offers wit, wisdom, and a good read. No one can ask for more."

— **Max L. Stackhouse**
Princeton Theological Seminary

ISBN 0-8028-0813-1 • 272 pages
Paperback • $15.00 • At your bookstore,
or call 800-253-7521 • FAX 616-459-6540

WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

religion offers, and that they may be justified, epistemically speaking (even if mistaken), in so saying.

Heim's work stands together with some other recent books, notably J. A. DiNoia's *The Diversity of Religions* (1992), in showing the incoherence of pluralism as a response to religious plurality; in reaffirming the unsurpassability of Christ and of the salvation offered by him; in arguing for fundamental religious difference; in claiming not only that non-Christian religions do make a similar claim about the unsurpassability of what they offer, but also that they have a right and duty to do so; and finally, in asserting that Christians and faithful non-Christian religious people, just because of their deep religious differences, their passionate religious commitments, and their lack of a place to stand outside those commitments, are likely to have a very great deal to learn from serious engagement with one another.

All this means that we have here an important book on an important topic. I hope it will, if nothing else, convince its readers of the close links between the ideology of pluralism and a voracious, omnivorous modernity, whose surface tolerance of all religions is indistinguishable from a profound hostility to all. If it does this, it will also have contributed to what Christians so badly need just now: a recovery of the courage to use, in the public sphere and in the face of religious others, the language of orthodoxy, and to use it with joy.

The Limits of Pragmatism

OVERCOMING LAW. By RICHARD A. POSNER. *Harvard University Press. 605 pp. $39.95.*

Reviewed by **Phillip E. Johnson**

RICHARD POSNER is one of the intellectual giants of the legal profession. As a professor at the University of Chicago Law School he founded the contemporary law and economics movement, taking economic analysis from its established home in antitrust law, and extending it to law in general—including torts, contracts, criminal law, property law, and family law. In subsequent works, Posner boldly attempted to turn economic analysis into an all-purpose philosophy of public life.

Economic analysis as practiced by Posner is something like utilitarianism. The main difference is that it does not aim to maximize all preferences equally, but favors preferences backed by purchasing power, which is a reward for producing goods or services valued by other people. People should obtain what they want by paying for it with their own earnings, not by forming political groups to pressure government to buy it for them with other people's tax money. The emphasis, in short, is on making a bigger economic pie through efficient exchanges, as opposed to the usual academic project of finding reasons to divide the existing pie more evenly.

In one essay Posner offended liberal sensitivities by stating that unproductive people—whether lazy or disabled—should eat only to the extent that their needs fit into the utility curve of productive persons. In another he proposed legitimating the sale of unwanted babies for adoption, thus profoundly shocking sentimental liberals who see nothing wrong with abortion. Although Professor Posner's proposals usually were closer to common sense than they sounded, and he was much more willing to modify his positions in response to criticism than most of his critics, his willingness to pursue a line of logic to disturbing conclusions earned him a reputation in some circles for having a powerful mind but no heart.

THE RICHARD POSNER of today has been a federal appellate judge for more than a decade, and judicial experience has tempered his earlier tendency to push market theory to its logical limits. His work output continues to be prodigious. Besides serving as Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and writing exceptionally literate and well-balanced judicial opinions, he publishes a substantial theoretical book more or less annually. If sheer ability were the main criterion, he would be named to the Supreme Court by acclamation, but he has left a vast "paper trail" of provocative statements that could be used against him in a confirmation hearing. He has been sufficiently critical of welfare liberalism and affirmative action to offend the left, and sufficiently supportive of a relativistic sexual morality to offend religious and social conservatives.

The opening chapters of *Overcoming Law* provide a succinct statement of Posner's current judicial philosophy, a mixture of pragmatism and scientism. Pragmatists emphasize the pursuit of useful knowledge rather than absolute truth, on the assumption that the latter is inaccessible to us. Posner identifies pragmatism in this sense with science, and aspires to "nudge the judicial game a little closer to the science game." This implies a relative indifference to such things as tradition, precedent, and the elusive "original intent" of legislators and constitution-framers.

Of course there are pragmatic reasons for following precedent and statutory language on most occasions, or at least pretending to do so, but Posner thinks that the strictly legal materials are too conflicting and incoherent to guide decision-making on the really controversial questions. For Posner as for Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., his intellectual forerunner, the ultimate goal of the judiciary is to maximize societal welfare with the aid of policy sciences like economics.

IN THIS VOLUME Posner is primarily engaged in a critique of the self-serving, competition-restricting traditions of the legal profession, and of the often utopian and ill-informed proposals of the law professors. What he says on these topics is always perceptive and frequently dev-

PHILLIP E. JOHNSON *is Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, and author most recently of* Reason in the Balance *(InterVarsity Press).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

astating. Much misery and confusion would be avoided if all judges were to heed Posner's admonition that they need to have clear goals and a realistic understanding of what judicial remedies can and cannot accomplish.

Posner thinks, for example, that *Brown v. Board of Education* was a great decision because the Warren Court pierced through the unrealistic rationalizations of "separate but equal" and articulated the social fact that legally mandated racial separation inherently kept African Americans in a state of political and social inferiority. Once the social reality was understood, "Jim Crow" segregation had to be declared unconstitutional regardless of whether the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment thought that the principle of equal protection of the laws was inconsistent with a state policy of racial separation in public schooling.

On the other hand, *Roe v. Wade* led the Court and the nation into endless trouble because the justices in the majority did not comprehend the moral and political dimensions of the abortion conflict, misperceiving it as a simple issue of liberty or medical practice. Posner writes that "On a pragmatic view the error of *Roe v. Wade* is not that it read the Constitution wrong—for there are plenty of well-regarded decisions that reflect an equally freewheeling approach to constitutional interpretation—but that it prematurely nationalized an issue better left to simmer at the state and local level until a consensus of some sort based on experience with a variety of approaches to abortion emerged."

That "wait and see" attitude may sound morally anemic, but there is a lot of good sense in it. It is good for judges and other powerful officials to have sound pragmatic instincts, especially if the alternative is a reckless determination to pursue some inflexible rule regardless of the costs.

Pragmatism as a total philosophy is another matter altogether, however. The defining characteristic of philosophical pragmatism is that it turns away from the concept that a proposition is true if it corresponds to absolute truth, "the way things really are." Instead, a body of theory is judged by its internal coherence and its usefulness in meeting the practical challenges of the world. Pragmatists think that this relativism allows them to avoid metaphysical claims, which they disparage as "dogma," but in practice this often means that they smuggle controversial metaphysical claims into their definitions.

Posner is no exception. He writes that because "No one knows how things really are," there is no logical way to settle disputes over first principles. For example, "A claim that every human being has had a

CHRIST AND AMERICA:
BELIEF AND
THE PUBLIC ARENA

FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
AT
WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PHILADELPHIA, PA • MARCH 19-21, 1996

"The Christian in Politics Today"

Richard John Neuhaus, L.H.D.
President, Religion and Public Life
Editor-in-Chief, *First Things*
Author, *The Naked Public Square*

"American Education in the Balance"

George M. Marsden, Ph.D.
Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History, University of Notre Dame
Author, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* and *The Soul of the American University*

"The Future of Religion in America"

Harold O. J. Brown, Ph.D.
Forman Chair of Ethics in Theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Editor, *The Religion and Society Report*
Author, *The Reconstruction of the Republic*

"The Age of Disbelief"

Stephen L. Carter, J.D.
William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law, Yale University
Author, *The Culture of Disbelief* and *Reflections of an Affirmative Action Baby*

"The City of God"

William S. Barker, Ph.D.
Professor of Church History and Vice President for Academic Affairs, WTS
Editor, *Theonomy, A Reformed Critique*

•Plus seminars • $75 ($50 before March 5)
•For more information, write or call
Judy Parnell; WTS
Box 27009; Philadelphia, PA 19118; 800/373-0119

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human father except Jesus Christ belongs to one frame of reference, the Christian; the denial of the claim to another, the scientific; both are found in our society." But that way of comparing Christian theism with scientific naturalism trivializes Christianity, and confuses science with scientism. All scientific investigation can say about the Virgin Birth is that such an event would be a miracle, and that is exactly what Christians say about it.

Posner then cites, apparently as a typical example of Christian thought, Cardinal Bellarmine's refusal to look through Galileo's telescope. He says that Bellarmine was not being irrational; he was just "refusing to play the science game," in which theories are required to conform to observation, because "his game was faith." He might as well have said that Bellarmine's game was superstition, or cynicism. If Christianity really involved a rejection of observation as a reliable basis for knowledge, then Christianity would be irrational on standards accepted by Christians themselves. Posner only pretends to take seriously the possibility that theism could be rational, while signalling with his terminology and choice of examples that rationality and scientific naturalism are virtually the same.

THERE IS THEREFORE a tension between Posner's pragmatism and his continuing inclination towards scientism. A more consistent pragmatist would recognize that, while science at its best provides useful knowledge, the scientific community has some of the same characteristics that cause other professions to cling to self-serving dogmas. Big science is a virtual government monopoly dominated by very ambitious people, who have every incentive to put the most favorable spin on the data to further their own careers. The notorious cases involving Robert Gallo and David Baltimore illustrate how difficult it is to confirm allegations of brazen fraud, let alone the much more common practice of selective presentation of data.

Big science requires big money, and to get that money scientists sometimes employ a certain amount of hype. Thus, the AIDS research lobby insists in the teeth of the data that "everyone is at risk"; physicists tell the public that a Theory of Everything is at hand if only we will build them a Supercollider; and environmental scientists warn of disasters that will occur if funding for their laboratories is not increased. To point this out is not to bash science, but merely to recognize that scientists, like generals, bishops, and university presidents, tend to say things that further their institutional interests. In other words they behave as pragmatists, and not as people who believe in absolute truth and value it for its own sake.

There is an old joke among philosophers that says that "pragmatism doesn't work." The insight behind the paradox is that a philosophy that deals only with means and has nothing to say about ultimate ends is inadequate. Who wants to rely upon people who think that the only truth is that we should employ the most effective means to get whatever it is we happen to want? Truth prevails among men and women who love truth more than they love wealth, security, and applause. Such persons may be pragmatic in practice, but in philosophy they are not pragmatists, because pragmatism provides no reason for preferring truth to the rewards that come from telling people what they want to hear.

Belonging

THEORIZING CITIZENSHIP. Edited by RONALD BEINER. *State University of New York Press. 335 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by **Gilbert Meilaender**

WHAT DOES it mean to *belong* to a political community? Is such belonging, which we call citizenship, important? What binds a body of people together in a political community and sustains their bond over time? These questions are both highly theoretical and eminently practical. In recent years we have seen Germany reunified, a European "community" formed, nations of Eastern Europe torn by ancient hostilities, and heated debate in this country (and elsewhere) about the issue of immigration and about affirmative action aimed at making minorities fuller participants in our common life.

Theorizing Citizenship is an excellent collection of essays by political theorists and philosophers, many of them well known (e.g., Pocock, Walzer, MacIntyre, Habermas, Kymlicka). They seek to bring theory to bear upon the practical problems of civic belonging, placing our contemporary concerns against a long and rich background of Western reflection upon the nature of political community. Many of the arguments are rich and detailed, and all will repay careful reading.

Who belongs? Why belong? The first developed attempt in our history to answer these questions came with the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome—especially with what theorists term "civic republicanism," given its chief articulation by Aristotle just as the polis was, in fact, nearing the end of its golden age. Characterizing this articulation as "one of the great Western definitions of what it is to be human," J.G.A. Pocock summarizes it as follows. "What makes the citizen the highest order of being is his capacity to rule, and it follows that rule over one's equal is possible only where one's equal rules over one. Therefore the citizen rules and is ruled; citizens join each other in making decisions where each decider respects the authority of the others, and all join in obeying the decisions . . . they have made." This activity of ruling and being ruled, the life of politics, is a distinctively public activity. As free participants in politics, citizens shape their own lives and thereby bring their nature to its highest fulfillment.

GILBERT MEILAENDER, *a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of* FIRST THINGS, *is the Francis Ward and Lydia Lord Davis Professor of Religion at Oberlin College.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

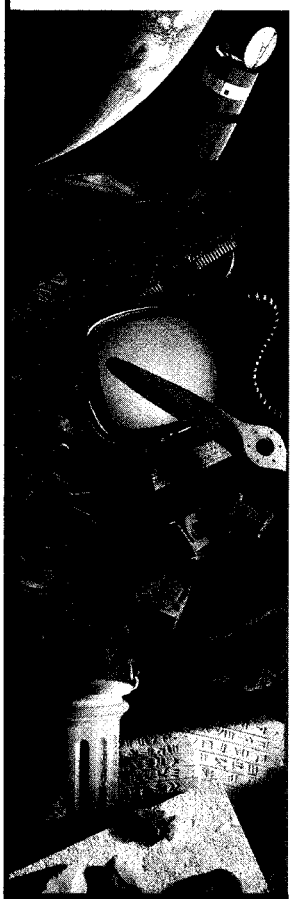
THE ACTIVITY of ruling and being ruled is not something one does simply as protection against the tyranny of a despot, nor does one participate in politics as a means to securing any private good. On the contrary, freely participating in the shaping of civic life simply *is* what it means to be fully human. But, alas, this life will be possible for some only if others—slaves, servants, and women in Aristotle's Athens—see to the daily needs of private life, and it will be possible only in quite small communities (as Rousseau, the greatest modern theorist of civic republicanism, made clear). Inevitably, or so it must seem to us, such an ideal must come under intense pressure—in practice from those who are excluded, and in theory perhaps even from those who are not. Pocock locates the first theoretical move toward greater universality of the civic community with Rome. In an empire, citizens cannot regularly meet face-to-face for deliberation about public affairs. "Belonging" comes to mean something different. A citizen was "someone free to act by law; free to ask and expect the law's protection." A citizen was one entitled to be treated in certain ways, and citizenship was determined by membership in a community of shared law rather than residence within a particular territory.

One might, however, soon wonder why only citizens were granted special entitlements, why we should distinguish between the citizen and the human being. Once residence in a particular territory, shared history, and active participation in public life become unnecessary for citizenship, we are on our way to the liberal tradition of politics. This tradition, in Ronald Beiner's words, is "concerned with upholding the dignity and inherent rights of individuals understood as instantiations of a *universal* humanity, and so it is unclear why this philosophy would accord any special moral status to the claims of citizenship."

AMONG THE essayists in this volume it is Joseph Carens who presses this point most insistently. Had a reviewer no obligations to his readers, I would be tempted to present Carens' essay as intentionally satirical; for it is a kind of reductio ad absurdum of a certain understanding of the Western liberal tradition. Carens argues that "borders should generally be open and that people should normally be free to leave their country of origin and settle in another, subject only to the sorts of constraints that bind current citizens in their new country." Drawing on the work of John Rawls, he suggests that "one could not justify restrictions on the grounds that those born in a given territory or born of parents who were citizens were more entitled to the benefits of citizenship than those born elsewhere or born of alien parents. Birthplace and parentage are natural contingencies that are 'arbitrary from a moral point of view.'"

Thus, in an argument purporting

ON MORAL BUSINESS
Classical and Contemporary Resources for Ethics in Economic Life
Edited by **MAX L. STACKHOUSE, DENNIS P. McCANN,** *and* **SHIRLEY J. ROELS,** *with* **PRESTON N. WILLIAMS**



"A massive array of relevant materials to help religious professionals and laypeople think about the connections between religiously based morality and the business world." **— ROBERT BENNE**

"The most comprehensive set of materials on business ethics ever assembled. . . . A gold mine of riches for both scholars and business practitioners." **— DAVID A. KRUEGER**

"In this one volume we have all the voices of our current debates on ethical issues in economic and business life. It represents a veritable communion of saints of ethical conversation." **— WILLIAM JOHNSON EVERETT**

"An exemplary collection of readings edited by a group of America's most distinguished Christian ethicists. I recommend it without reservation." **— EDMUND LEITES**

"Awesome! The diversity and scope of sources and topics in this volume are incredible. I know of no other resource that includes such a broad range of points of view over such a broad time frame. This reader is an invaluable resource." **— JOHN W. EBY**

ISBN 0-8028-0626-0
991 pages • Paperback • $35.00s

At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521
FAX 616-459-6540
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to extend the implications of a liberal politics, we meet the tyranny of "the" moral point of view. I do not mean to underestimate the force of Carens' claim. The suggestion that universal community uproots all claims of particular attachment is the philosophical equivalent of the theological argument that grace does not perfect but destroys nature. Taken alone, however, that theological argument has never been satisfactory. Jews have not been drawn to it at all, and even Christians have regarded a life that transcends all particular bonds as a special, and nonuniversalizable, calling. They have described even heaven not simply as a universal community of generic individuals but as a "vast friendship" in which all share, in different ways, the praise of God.

To return to the less rarefied air of citizenship, Carens' argument, by finding little reason to exclude anyone from a civic community, can make little sense of what it would mean to belong to such a community. As Alasdair MacIntyre notes in his essay, "patriotism is one of a class of loyalty-exhibiting virtues" that involve "a regard founded upon a particular historical relationship of association." Citizens who are less deracinated than those pictured by Carens would think, in Michael Walzer's words, that "to live well is to participate with other men and women in remembering, cultivating, and passing on a national heritage." Walzer notes how often and how readily the "free-floating intensity" of this sense of national membership can "be turned against other nations, [and] particularly against the internal others: minorities, aliens, strangers." MacIntyre also grants that patriotic loyalty is "a permanent source of moral danger," but he argues forcefully that a purely liberal politics is also "a permanent source of moral danger because of the way it renders our social and moral ties too open to dissolution by rational criticism."

Having begun with the limited and exclusive bond of civic republicanism, our political tradition moved to the greater universality and inclusiveness of liberal democracy. Carens' argument is one way to dissolve the bonds of democratic citizenship—by arguing that even it has not been universal enough. Extending the boundaries until they are virtually eliminated, he, in effect, loses the ability to explain what it means to belong to a civic community.

BUT THE TRADITION of liberal democracy can also be criticized from the opposite direction—as suppressing difference and particularity. That approach is taken by Iris Marion Young, who seeks to defend what she calls "a concept of *differentiated* citizenship." Liberal democracy, with its push toward universality, treats individuals generically and creates homogeneous citizens. There can be no doubt that Young is at least partly correct in this claim, though this tendency has not resulted only, as she seems to suggest, from pernicious attempts to suppress differences and exclude those who are different. It is also, in large measure, the result of an attempt to be fair and just, to treat all alike.

Such justice does not satisfy Young, however. By identifying what is generically human with the public realm and identifying our particular characteristics with the private, our polity "makes homogeneity a requirement of public participation." She argues, therefore, that the participants represented in public deliberation should be not simply individuals but groups. Oppressed or disadvantaged groups—including in the United States today "women, blacks, Native Americans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other Spanish-speaking Americans, Asian Americans, gay men, lesbians, working-class people, poor people, old people, and mentally and physically disabled people"—should have specific group representation in public life. Citizens who are members of "privileged groups" already have de facto representation and are, in fact, more equal than others under the homogenizing pressure of liberal democracy. For members of oppressed or disadvantaged groups the ideal of full-fledged citizenship is far from reality. A principle of group representation is needed if they are to be fully included in public life. That principle must include even "the institutionalized right to veto policy proposals that directly affect them."

This, of course, is akin to the theory from which President Clinton drew back when reconsidering his nomination of Lani Guinier for Attorney General, and with this theory Young makes common cause with John Calhoun's advocacy of concurrent majorities, an irony that indicates how deep is the crisis in our understanding of citizenship. When Carens pressed universality too far, it became difficult to explain what it might mean to belong to a civic community. Likewise, when Young attacks from the other side—the side of particularity—and presses it too far, it becomes difficult to find any common life that we might all one day hope to share. We are caught in what Habermas succinctly describes as "the conflict between the universalistic principles of constitutional democracies on the one hand and the particularistic claims of communities to preserve the integrity of their *habitual* ways of life on the other."

NONE OF THE essayists in this volume seeks to "theorize citizenship" in religious terms. One wonders, however, whether that might not be helpful. The desire to belong—to get inside—is very deeply rooted in us. We want to be fully ourselves, fully particular, yet united with others in

Coming in February

"Why We Can/Can't All Just Get Along"

An exchange between Stanley Fish and Richard John Neuhaus

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a good no one need fear to share, a common good in which one need not fear to have colleagues. Desiring that so intensely, we too readily create idols. The tradition of civic republicanism in the hands of one who intensely desires to belong—Rousseau, for instance—becomes such an idol, because it depicts a community that demands the whole of our allegiance and offers in return human fulfillment defined as a kind of self-mastery. Liberal democracy is, by contrast, chastened. It offers less—only a kind of generic justice. If that is not everything we desire, as Iris Marion Young rightly sees, it is still a considerable achievement.

To ask more of politics, to ask it to overcome the barriers that divide us, join the Many into One, and unify life, is to ask that politics be redemptive. That it cannot be. Liberal democracy, accepting reluctantly the gap between public and private, attaches a kind of eschatological reservation to our desire to belong. Since we have here no continuing city, we ought not ask for more.

Feeling Good

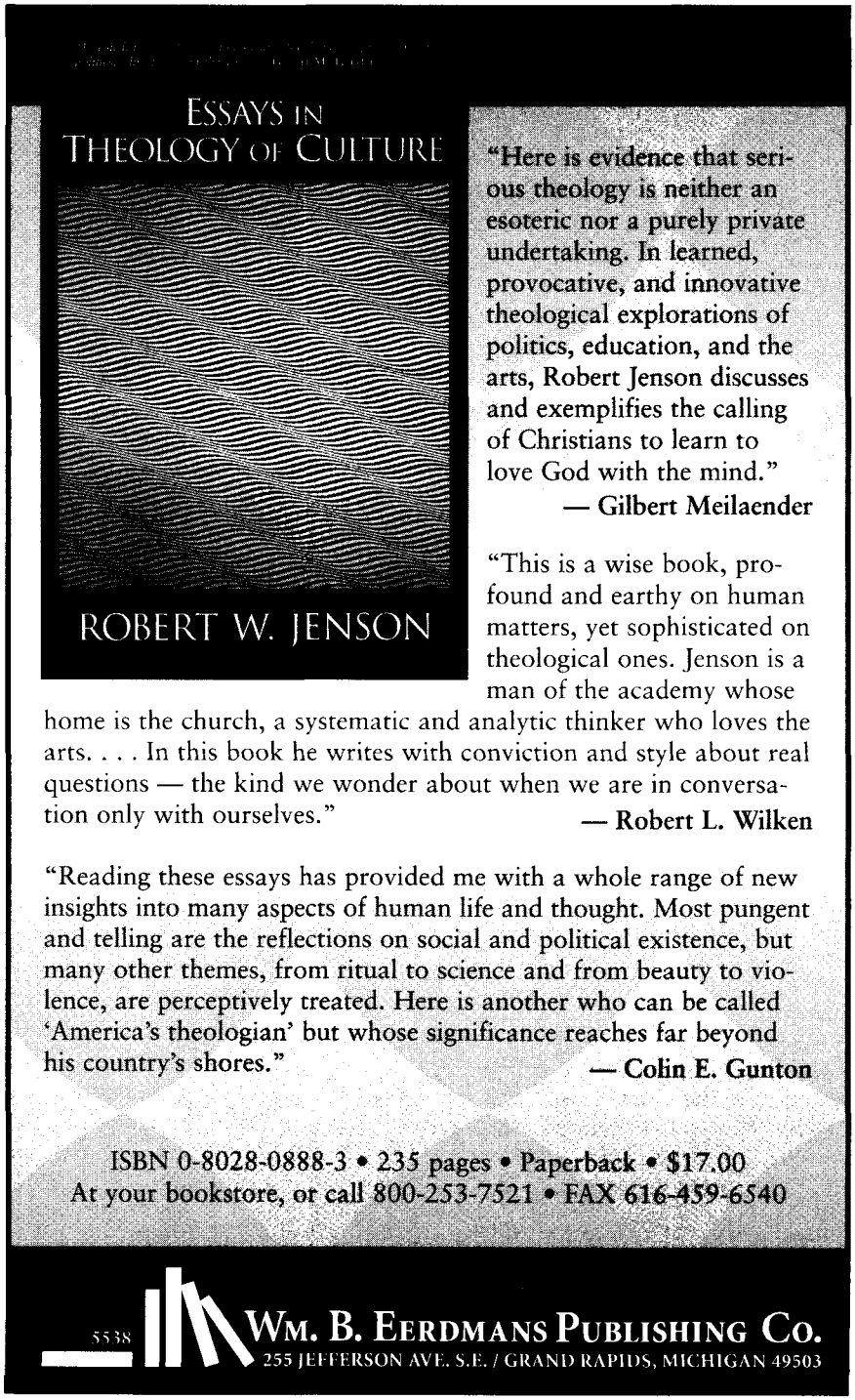
RESPONSIBILITY AND THE MORAL SENTIMENTS. By R. JAY WALLACE. *Harvard University Press. 275 pp. $39.95.*

***Reviewed by* Daniel N. Robinson**

IN THE RICH and various pages of Enlightenment thought, there are several fairly well developed psychologies offered in justification of political and moral theories. In the absence of a coherent account of human nature, after all, disquisitions on government and principles of right conduct are merely castles in the air.

This chapter of Enlightenment thought was prefigured in the immensely influential writings of John Locke, who had set about in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to develop a mental science—a psychology—following the path established by Isaac Newton. Thus do we find the Lockean mind comprised of elementary sensations that are combined by bonds of association into simple and then ever more complex ideas, just as the corpuscular universe of Newton, through gravitational forces, comes to possess large and complex bodies. The Lockean sensations are "corpuscular," the binding force of association "gravitational." In the patrimony of Newton and Locke, eighteenth-century British and French writers were at pains to

DANIEL N. ROBINSON *is Professor of Psychology at Georgetown University and an occasional lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Oxford. His books include* Aristotle's Psychology, Psychology and Law, *and* An Intellectual History of Psychology.


ESSAYS IN
THEOLOGY OF CULTURE
ROBERT W. JENSON
"Here is evidence that serious theology is neither an esoteric nor a purely private undertaking. In learned, provocative, and innovative theological explorations of politics, education, and the arts, Robert Jenson discusses and exemplifies the calling of Christians to learn to love God with the mind."
— Gilbert Meilaender
"This is a wise book, profound and earthy on human matters, yet sophisticated on theological ones. Jenson is a man of the academy whose home is the church, a systematic and analytic thinker who loves the arts. . . . In this book he writes with conviction and style about real questions — the kind we wonder about when we are in conversation only with ourselves."
— Robert L. Wilken
"Reading these essays has provided me with a whole range of new insights into many aspects of human life and thought. Most pungent and telling are the reflections on social and political existence, but many other themes, from ritual to science and from beauty to violence, are perceptively treated. Here is another who can be called 'America's theologian' but whose significance reaches far beyond his country's shores."
— Colin E. Gunton
ISBN 0-8028-0888-3 • 235 pages • Paperback • $17.00
At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521 • FAX 616-459-6540
5538
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

throw off the burdensome and misleading authority of scholasticism and rationalism, which, as they construed these traditions, would have us somehow deducing any number of "truths" from abstract premises otherwise unavailable to ordinary experience.

The alternative to all this (an alternative yielding in Newton's hands scientific discoveries of unprecedented power and precision) was to take the facts of the world as these are found by direct observation and only then attempt to organize them under general laws. The approach was to be that so trenchantly advanced by Francis Bacon: systematic, empirical, public, and available to anyone with ordinary powers of perception and unprejudiced judgment.

WHAT, THEN, OF MORALS? One cannot perceive rightness and wrongness or good and evil in the external world of things or happenings. The domain of morality seems the quintessential domain of abstract rationality in which the senses are less a tool than a problem. The empiricists' answer here generated an entire school of moral thought sometimes referred to as "Moral Sense Theory" or "British Sentimentalism." It included Francis Hutcheson, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Adam Smith, Bishop Butler, David Hume, and many others.

Though disagreeing among themselves even on fundamental principles, members of the school shared this much: that moral terms must refer to something ultimately observable; that the reference of such terms is a sentiment or feeling of approbation or revulsion; that the moral quality of an act is determined by the sentiments it excites; that at the core of morality is a distinctly human nature inclined toward social and political forms of association; that, accordingly, the moral sense is part of the common heritage of humanity and is thus likely to be the same at base even under culturally dissimilar conditions.

Various paradoxes have stalked defenders of this tradition and fortified defenders of the radically different tradition given its late-Enlightenment voice in the works of Immanuel Kant. Surely there is more to morality than feeling, and surely nothing in a feeling as such can create a moral imperative to action. Moreover, the mark of moral responsibility is the actor's freedom to choose a course of action or reach a moral judgment. But if the moral dimensions of life are causally brought about by natural sentiments—if "right" and "wrong" are the consequences of a kind of emotional reflex—then the moral agent is merely an instrument of his own dispositions. As Aristotle had taught, the moral side of life certainly includes such emotions as anger and love. The moral question, however, has to do not with the emotion itself, but also with the things toward which we are emotionally disposed to react—as, for instance, virtue (toward which we react with affection) and vice (toward which we react with contempt). What is at issue is not the sentiments of affection and contempt, but the judgment of what deserves such attitudes and feelings. The judgment being irreducibly rational, a moral form of life then is seen as the gift of reason.

KANT, OF COURSE, went much further. If an action is impelled by any desire arising from the contingent psychological or biological facts of life, then it is determined by these and cannot therefore be moral at all. We are at once natural and rational beings. As creatures of nature we occupy the natural realm and are determined in our actions by the laws of nature. As rational beings we occupy the "intelligible" realm in which actions are determined not by causes but by reasons; by justifications grounded in principles that are moral as such. Actions are morally right or wrong, then, to the extent that they instantiate or violate a moral maxim.

In *Responsibility and the Moral Sentiments* R. Jay Wallace contributes his own interesting thoughts and arguments to this now venerable debate between the sentimentalist and Kantian traditions. The daunting task he sets out to accomplish is at once to provide an account of moral responsibility based on what Sir Peter Strawson has called the "reactive emotions" (love, gratitude, guilt, resentment, indignation), as well as an account that takes seriously the claims of determinism, nondeterminism, and compatibilism within the context of morality. In a manner rather self-consciously eclectic he seeks to retain the realistic psychology of the moral-sense theorists but at the same time to confer on moral beings "general powers of reflective self-control." The overall agenda of the book is usefully set forth early:

> First, we cannot establish what it is to be a morally responsible agent unless we first understand the stance of holding someone responsible—the stance of the moral judge, rather than of the agent who is judged. Second, determining what the conditions of responsibility are will require an excursion into normative moral theory: we will need to investigate our principles of fairness, to see what they entail about the conditions under which it would be fair to hold people responsible.

Wallace is careful to distinguish between the mere *having* of a reactive emotion and its propriety. Accordingly, one might correctly regard an action as worthy of resentment, even if resentment is not actually felt; and one may experience resentment where it is not warranted. Moreover, not all expectations are moral. To hold one morally responsible is to have a moral expectation that, when unfulfilled, yields moral resentment. Again, it is not the experienced emotions or feelings that populate the domain of moral responsibility. Judgment is the invariable accessory to all reactive emotions associated with holding others morally responsible.

Wallace, it should be noted, is centrally concerned with the issue of de-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

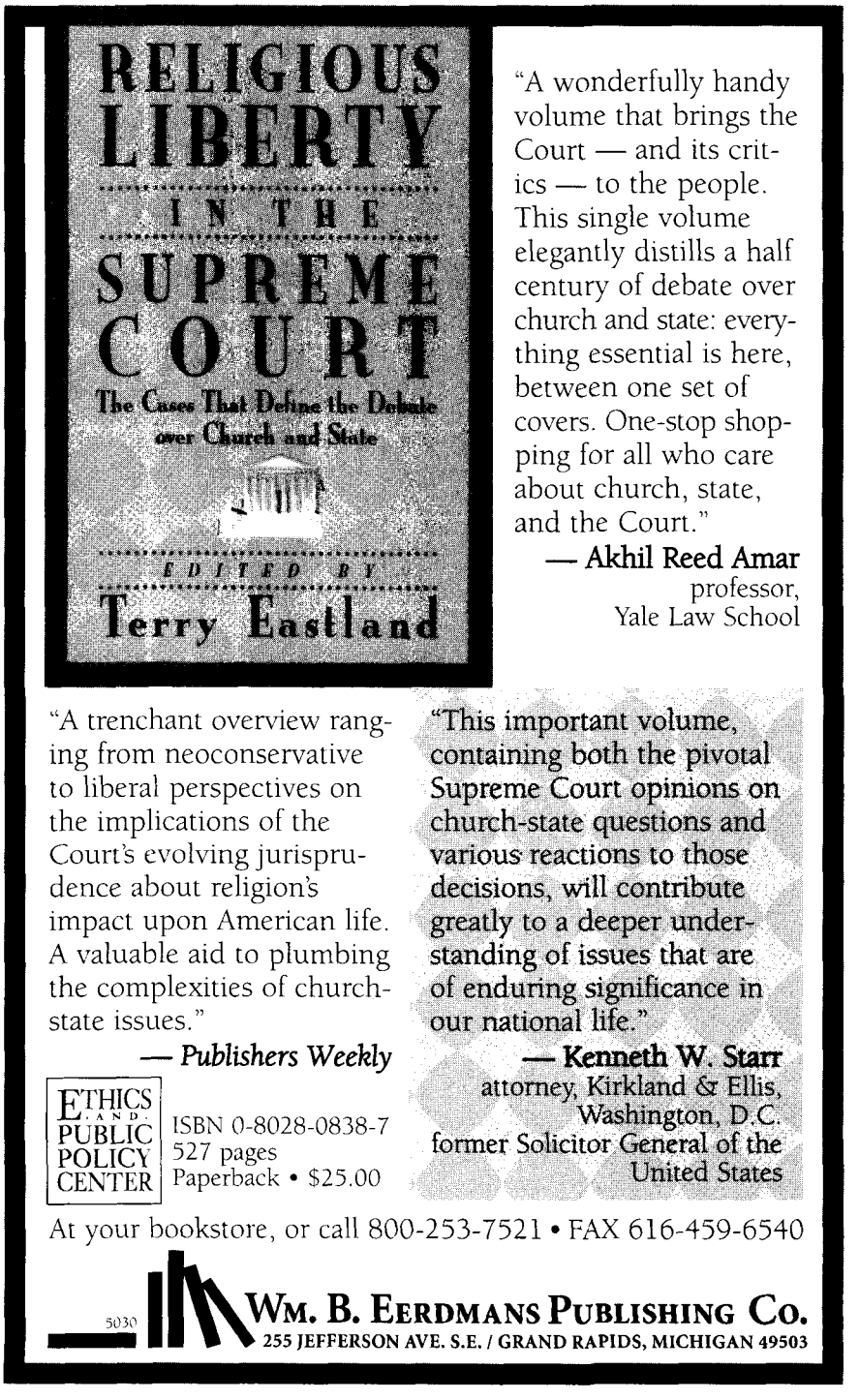
terminism and moral freedom, and whether the best arguments are likely to be found on the side of determinism, nondeterminism, or compatibilism. The strict determinist contends that a complete description of the world at a given time predicts all future states of the world, provided the (determinative) laws of nature are known. As Wallace puts it, "For any action that is performed, it is never open to any agent . . . to render false a proposition that describes the action." Freedom, on this construal, must be utterly incompatible with determinism.

When the incompatibilist insists that determinism renders the concepts of praise and blame jejune, Wallace's cautious rejoinder is that, though the incompatibilist's rationale is sound, basic human tendencies have been overlooked. It is just the case, reasons Wallace (here following a line set out in Strawson's "Freedom and Resentment"), that human beings in their social and interpersonal relationships are moved to judge actions as blameworthy or praiseworthy. These natural inclinations are bound up with reactive emotions and attitudes, and this would remain the case even if determinism is true.

WHAT WALLACE seems to be arguing for here is some sort of naturalistic psychology of human types: a kind of "moral ethology" according to which we express approval or condemnation as a result of certain inborn dispositions. There is an air of the ipse dixit in all of this and, though versions of moral intuitionism can be philosophically deep and convincing, Wallace's treatise seems rather weak here. For the scholar who would undertake the task of assessing competing moral systems, of what benefit is it to learn that human beings are somehow inclined by nature to praise and blame? How is this inclination to be understood and then absorbed into a defensible moral theory?

To hold one morally responsible, Wallace says, is to have an expectation which, when unrequited, naturally arouses such reactive emotions as resentment and indignation. Again, this can be played out within a rigidly deterministic framework and we will still hold others (and ourselves) morally responsible, insists Wallace, for essential to such holdings are the expectations and then the entirely natural human reactions when these are unfulfilled. Some form of compatibilism, therefore, may be espoused without fear of forfeiting what is necessary for the grounding of morals. What is necessary is the "stance," the preparedness to expect certain conduct and to regard as apt reactive emotional responses when that conduct is not forthcoming.

ONE OF Wallace's principle objec-


RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
IN THE SUPREME COURT
The Cases That Define the Debate over Church and State
EDITED BY
Terry Eastland
"A wonderfully handy volume that brings the Court — and its critics — to the people. This single volume elegantly distills a half century of debate over church and state: everything essential is here, between one set of covers. One-stop shopping for all who care about church, state, and the Court."
— Akhil Reed Amar
professor,
Yale Law School
"A trenchant overview ranging from neoconservative to liberal perspectives on the implications of the Court's evolving jurisprudence about religion's impact upon American life. A valuable aid to plumbing the complexities of church-state issues."
— Publishers Weekly
"This important volume, containing both the pivotal Supreme Court opinions on church-state questions and various reactions to those decisions, will contribute greatly to a deeper understanding of issues that are of enduring significance in our national life."
— Kenneth W. Starr
attorney, Kirkland & Ellis,
Washington, D.C.
former Solicitor General of the United States
ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER
ISBN 0-8028-0838-7
527 pages
Paperback • $25.00
At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521 • FAX 616-459-6540
5030
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tives is to offer a developed version of compatibilism in order to preserve both the overall deterministic metaphysics guiding scientific thought and the autonomy presupposed by moral thought. He seeks to accomplish this by arguing along the lines of Harry Frankfurt's thesis: One remains responsible for one's action even in the absence of any viable alternative course of action. Determinism may be true, says Wallace, but Jane Austen is still granted those "powers of reflective self-control" needed to write *Pride and Prejudice*.

But what of these powers? Does self-control refer to moral or merely intellectual autonomy? Is it a control conferred by the determined operations of the brain? Or is there a specific, non-substitutable writer, the absence of whose unique and morally defined search for truth in life would forever rule out the possibility of *Pride and Prejudice*? To the compatibilist this rejoinder is offered: Writing a book is, indeed, caused. It is caused by the will of the author. And the will of the author is caused by the author herself.

In fairness, Wallace's failure here—for I do judge it to be a failure—merely installs his name among a list of eminent thinkers who have tried to place a square moral peg into a round physical hole. The failure begins with the project itself. The project is to render the facts of human behavior conformable to what is taken to be that universal causal nexus within which everything occurs. But it is the very phenomenon of moral judgment that urges some sort of dualism on our ontologies, and this cannot be set aside merely by assuming that everything is physical. In other words, for those who take certain events to be irreducibly moral, any and all references to the determinative laws of physical nature are simply beside the point. In a thoughtful passage in his concluding chapter, Wallace is tempted to adhere to this recognition, but he then returns to the defense of a competing compatibilism.

Needless to say, human actions are impelled by any number of conditions, internal and external, rendering the actions more or less predictable. Where the force of circumstance is such as to nullify the results of moral judgment and moral resolve, the actor is generally thought of as the victim of coercion or duress and thus comes to enjoy some degree of exculpation. It is not at all clear what would count as "mitigating" on a compatibilist account of moral "freedom." But in a densely argued chapter ("The Lure of Liberty"), Wallace does offer an acceptable notion of mitigation: Where conditions actually defeat the morally responsible aims of an actor—aims arising from the actor's powers of reflective self-control—there is no need for mitigation, for the actor has done nothing wrong. And where conditions defeat not the aims but the very powers themselves, there is nothing to be mitigated, for there is not an authentic action in the first instance. The Kantian echo is most audible in the concluding pages of the chapter, where Wallace reminds the reader that the "can" pertaining to responsibility is the "can" of rational power, not the "can" of alternative courses of action.

In this, too, there seems to be an unwillingness to press on toward conclusions different from those Wallace embraces. His argument for compatibilism includes the claim that what matters for moral responsibility is not freedom to choose from an array of undetermined courses of action but the power of reflective self-control. What matters in assigning such responsibility are those reactive emotions tied to moral expectations: expectations warranted just in case those we hold responsible do have such powers of self-control.

What does not matter, on this account—and what on the determinist's account does not even exist—is a set of "alternate possibilities" which the actor can freely tap. But then just what is the moral dilemma facing a responsible actor? The principles of practical reason are, presumably, those that are to be dispositive at realistic choice-points; at just those junctures at which we actually can realize any number of significant outcomes and must choose the path that matches up with a moral maxim worthy of our allegiance. The possession of reactive emotions and some inward power of self-control in an otherwise and previously established order may allow one to perform in a moral way. The problem, however, is not that it would be a good or bad performance, but that it would be a mere performance.

R. Jay Wallace has written a book worth reading and, that rare specimen today, a book worth writing. He has taken on a foundational question: Just what is it we are doing when we hold others morally responsible? He has wondered aloud if such holdings even make sense. He has sought shelter in a compatibilism likely to be rejected by those adhering to the far more interesting theories of determinism and incompatibilism. Yet, he prevails on us to accept his own position. He prevails on our capacity to choose rationally from "alternate possibilities" and thereupon to be disposed to act in certain ways toward others. How could it be otherwise?

BRIEFLY NOTED

In and Out of the Mind: Greek Images of the Tragic Self. By Ruth Padel. *Princeton University Press. 210 pp. $12.95 paper.*

Whom Gods Destroy: Elements of Greek and Tragic Madness. By Ruth Padel. *Princeton University Press. 276 pp. $29.95.*

A brilliant book, Padel's first work—now reissued in paperback—examines the philosophy, medicine, religion, and tragedy of fifth-century Greece to capture the Greeks' image of the mind. Padel seeks to show, ultimately, that we ought to understand Greek thought as alien to our own. The fifth-century Greeks did not clearly separate, as we do, human and divine, mind and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Changing Witness

Catholic Bishops and Public Policy, 1917-1994

MICHAEL WARNER

Foreword by George Weigel

Historian MICHAEL WARNER traces the development of the social teachings of America's Catholic bishops from World War I to the present and shows how papal teaching, the reception of the Second Vatican Council, the upheavals in American morals, mores, and politics, and the bureaucratic evolution of the bishops' conference all contribute to a "changing witness" in the volatile years between 1917 and 1994.

How successfully have the American bishops translated Scripture and the Church's social doctrine into the American context? Have the bishops articulated a coherent, persuasive public philosophy as a foundation for their social activism? Is the Church today speaking to public life as the Church, or as another partisan player in the political game? Probing for answers to these vital questions, Warner detects a profound paradigm shift at work, as the bishops gradually abandoned their traditional analytic framework in favor of a generally liberal reading of the "signs of the times."

Michael Warner is a historian who since 1992 has worked with the history staff of the Central Intelligence Agency. Before that he served as an analyst in the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence. He is the editor of *The CIA under Harry Truman* and holds a doctorate in history from the University of Chicago. George Weigel is the president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

224 pages ❖ $20 paper ❖ ISBN 0-8028-4071-x

"Informative and insightful, particularly in illuminating the peculiarities of appropriation and application by U.S. bishops of Roman Catholic social teaching since Leo XIII, the origins and evolution of the U.S. Catholic Conference, and the post-Vatican II shift away from Thomism as the philosophical framework for Roman Catholic social thought."—BOOKLIST

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER
1015 Fifteenth Street NW ❖ Washington, D.C. 20005
(202)682-1200 ❖ *fax* (202)408-0632

Please send me *Changing Witness*: _____ copies paper, at $20 each.

$_____ Cost of book(s)

_____ D.C. residents: add 5.75% sales tax

_____ Postage ($2.00 first copy, 50¢ each add'l)

$_____ TOTAL

ISBN 0-8028-4071-X

❑ I have enclosed $ _____.

❑ Bill my ❑ VISA or ❑ MasterCard account.

NAME

STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

CARD NUMBER EXPIRES

SIGNATURE

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER
1015 Fifteenth Street NW, #900 ❖ Washington, D.C. 20005 ❖ 202/682-1200 ❖ *fax* 202/408-0632

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

body, inner and outer, or even metaphorical and literal meaning. For them, what happens to the mind—disease or divination, emotion or madness—comes mainly from outside the mind and mainly from the gods. Padel uses Aeschylus' *Oresteia* as her model, arguing that tragedy explores, through the central theme of madness, the mind and its relations. In some ways, Padel's newly published second book is a continuation of her first. She returns, in the strongest and most central chapters, to the brilliant linguistic analysis of her first book and to madness as the theme of tragedy. Both books raise for us the question of the cost of establishing the alien nature of Greek thought—a question that first arose with Nietzsche. If Greek tragedy ignores distinctions we now make, if it understands the mind as turned outward and changeable by the gods, if it does not separate metaphorical from literal meanings, what then can we learn from it? Such a question faces not merely classicists, but all who think of Western culture as a continuous history, all who think the Greeks can, somehow, help us. The first book is essential for anyone interested in Greek tragedy or psychology; the latter is recommendable.

— *Drew E. Griffin*

THE POET'S BOOK OF PSALMS. By LAURANCE WIEDER. *HarperSan Francisco. 311 pp. $25.*

That moving from Robert Burns' rendition of the first psalm to John Milton's of the second doesn't doom this collection from the start testifies to the Psalms' vitality. The compiler, Laurance Wieder, simply chooses what he considers the best poetic rendition in English of each psalm—whether from a poet as old as Miles Coverdale or as new as Laurance Wieder. It was no surprise to me that the modern poets eschew rhyme and metrical regularity, but it was a surprise that only two of the twenty-three earlier poets—Campion and Coleridge—knew better than to render the brawny Hebrew of the psalms in rhyme and meter. The chiming seems trivial, for the most part, and the collection contains hundreds of lines of bad poetry. One major exception is George Herbert's masterful Psalm 23; others include Thomas Wyatt's seldom-anthologized translations. Sir Philip Sidney's psalms are surprisingly bad, but his little-known sister's are surprisingly good. In or out of the madhouse, Christopher Smart wrote with startling clarity. Though Wieder asserts that in the pinch he preferred good poems above good translations, the paler poems in the collection are weak most often because they stick close to the Hebrew. Wieder's own poems—some of which first appeared in FIRST THINGS—are indeed strong, but one can't exactly call them translations. In Psalm 21, where the Lord has blessed the king and will destroy his enemies, Wieder has, "The haves shall have and have more," while "The others drink December polar murk." Not bad, but not precisely what the Psalmist had in mind. This collection is not without its charms, especially for the poetically and religiously experienced reader. But the novice seeking either exact translations or consistently strong religious verse should probably start elsewhere.

— *Bryan Crockett*

CHURCH AND STATE IN THE MODERN AGE. Edited by J. F. MACLEAR. *Oxford University Press. 510 pp. $65.*

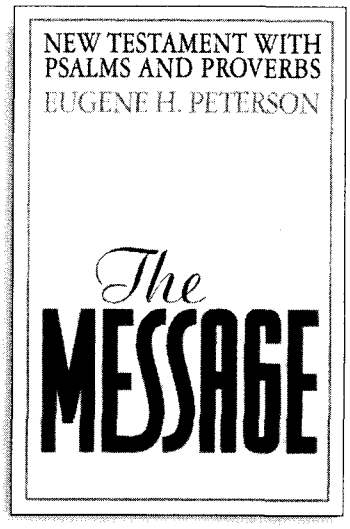
This is a five star achievement. Any personal or institutional library that pretends to even a passing interest in church-state questions cannot afford to be without it. Maclear's "documentary history" provides the major texts that crop up again and again in discussions of church-state relations but are themselves frequently inaccessible to all but specialists. Of course there are some of the usual U.S. documents, including Supreme Court decisions, but the sweep of this volume truly includes "the modern age"—beginning with pre-Revolutionary France and taking us up through developments in Central and Eastern Europe on the eve of the Communist collapse. The editor, professor emeritus of history at the University of Minnesota, exercises keen discrimination in focusing on those texts, both official and unofficial, that capture the decisive conflicts in the history of religious freedom. Here is the Syllabus of Errors of 1864, plus Bishop Dupanloup's influential commentary on that historic document, along with Bismarck's Pulpit Law of 1871 and Patriarch Tikhon's Confession during the Bolshevik persecution of the 1920s. Nobody before this has brought together such a wide variety of documentation bearing on the great question of this and every time—the freedom of persons and communities to challenge "the principalities and powers" in the name of Ultimate Truth. Friends of religious freedom everywhere owe a deep debt of gratitude to Professor Maclear and Oxford University Press.

GIDEON'S TORCH. By CHARLES COLSON. *Word. 553 pp. $21.99.*

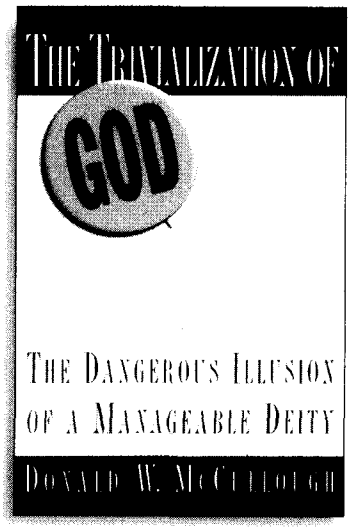
Charles Colson is a great Christian witness, minister to the imprisoned, champion of unity, and defender of the helpless, born and unborn. A great novelist he is not. The present book (written with Ellen Vaughn) is the story of what goes wrong, terribly wrong, with America when a future president, J. Whitney Griswold, reacts to anti-abortion violence by effectively suspending the Constitution in order to destroy the pro-life movement. It is in part a *roman à clef*, thinly disguising the particulars of Colson's intimate knowledge of the sordid side of Washington gained from his work in Nixon's White House. (Michael Novak is the only real-life name that is named, somewhat in passing.) The book is in major part a tract contending that the only antidote to pervasive political and personal corruption is Christ. The characters and speeches are often stilted and formulaic, and yet *Gideon's Torch* is, withal, a powerful and frequently gripping depiction of the truth that "it can happen here." One leaves the book with a reinforced sense of the fragili-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

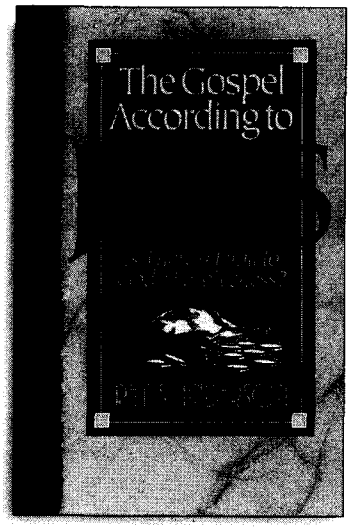
BRINGING TRUTH TO LIFE.



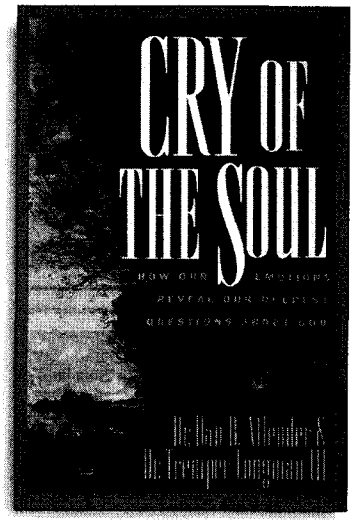
Experience the power of the New Testament, the passion of the Psalms, and the wisdom of Proverbs—in one volume! (Hardback/$23; Paperback/$17)



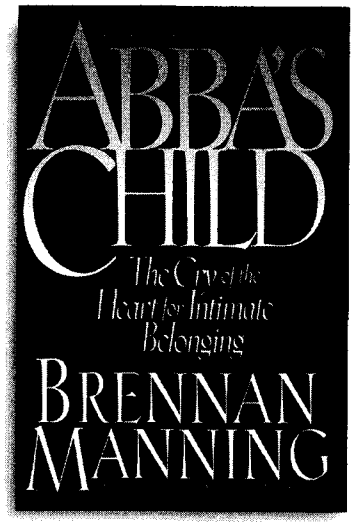
Discover how much bigger and more powerful God is than the manageable deities we have put in His place. (Hardback/$16)



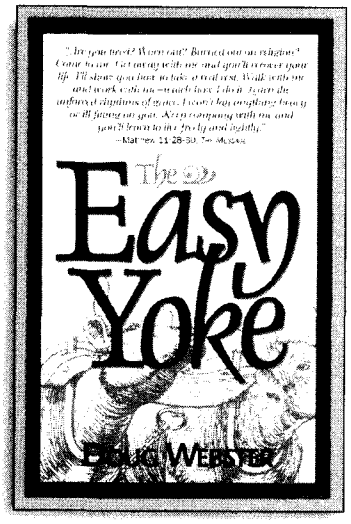
Could Judas be forgiven? This book explores the limits of God's forgiveness and the depths of His grace and mercy. (Paperback/$10)



When embraced rather than suppressed or controlled, our negative emotions—anger, jealousy, fear—actually reveal truths about God's nature. (Hardback/$18)



Don't let an imposter rob you of a deeper relationship with God. Discover the deep, unconditional love of "Abba." (Paperback/$12)



Instead of following a formula, we need to take a closer look at what *Jesus* said it means to follow Him. (Paperback/$10)

NAVPRESS

Available at your favorite bookstore. Or call NavPress at 1-800-336-7788 and ask for offer #1730.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ty of our constitutional order, and of the ways in which abortion and related questions drive to the heart of its sustainability. The message is unqualifiedly opposed to the use of violence in order to achieve good, but also a deeply disturbing reminder that violence is made almost inevitable when the legal and political system is unresponsive to the deepest convictions of millions of Americans. As a literary endeavor, *Gideon's Torch* will likely receive short shrift, but the argument presented in the form of a novel deserves careful attention and should prompt sobering discussions about the kind of nation we are and could become.

THE RECOLLECTED HEART. By PHILIP ZALESKI. *HarperCollins. 192 pp. $12 paper.*

Zaleski, a Benedictine oblate and occasional contributor to these pages, offers a winsome invitation to go on spiritual retreat. Here are all the suggestions for making a retreat at home or in some place away, alone or with others. In a time when the word "spirituality" has become suspect—so connected is it with all the flailings about of unbridled desire and dubious therapies—this is a bracingly orthodox guide to fuller communion with God through Christ.

EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM IN EASTERN EUROPE. By CHARLES GLENN. *Cato Institute. 338 pp. $25.95 cloth, $15.95 paper.*

A valuable contribution by the author of *The Myth of the Common School* and perhaps our leading authority on comparative education systems. The book is about the painful and confused transitions from Communist totalitarianism—pains and confusions that in different ways attend educational reform also in this country. Glenn is especially sensitive to the role of morality and religion in education, and to the rights of parents in deciding how their children should be reared. A valuable contribution.

THE MODERN CATHOLIC NOVEL IN EUROPE. By THEODORE P. FRASER. *Twayne. 210 pp. $24.95.*

In his straightforward, surehanded account of the Catholic novel after the late 1800s, Prof. Fraser analyzes the novels of the well-known British Catholics Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene and the novels of the Continental Catholics that have never had the audience in America that they deserve: Bernanos, Mauriac, Green, Chesbron. Especially welcome is the chapter on Scandinavian and German Catholic novelists Undset, Le Fort, and Langgässer. Prof. Fraser's analysis ends somewhat abruptly with the last generation of novelists raised before Vatican II, and thus makes no real advance beyond the well-known analyses of the Catholic novel by Conor Cruise O'Brien and David Lodge. But the book remains what the Twayne World Authors Series is supposed to provide: a useful handbook and introduction for students and interested amateurs.

THE TRIVIALIZATION OF GOD: THE DANGEROUS ILLUSION OF A MANAGEABLE DEITY. By DONALD W. MCCULLOUGH. *NavPress. 172 pp. $16.*

The president of San Francisco Theological Seminary offers a sprightly and at times disturbing critique of the many ways in which we try to domesticate God—fitting Him into our emotions, concepts, or social-political proclivities. A theologically informed reflection that will benefit Christians of whatever communion or spiritual stripe.

ALL YOU WHO LABOR. By STEFAN CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI. *Sophia. 191 pp. $16.95.*

These reflections on work and the sanctification of everyday life by the late primate of Poland (d. 1981) had a significant influence on Lech Walesa and the Solidarity movement that led to the collapse of communism. In addition to their inherent value, they also throw light on the background of John Paul II's many writings on the meaning of work.

A FAITH FOR ALL SEASONS. By TED M. DORMAN. *Broadman & Holman. 391 pp. $27.99.*

Coming out of years of teaching at Taylor University, a Christian school in Indiana, this book, written by a Protestant, evidences an admirable ecumenical and historical reach. It is an introduction to basic Christian beliefs (in the C. S. Lewis "mere Christianity" mode) and is well suited to undergraduate classroom use.

IS JESUS A REPUBLICAN OR A DEMOCRAT? By TONY CAMPOLO. *Word. 192 pp. $17.95.*

The author's answer is that Jesus is neither. It turns out that Jesus agrees with Mr. Campolo, an evangelical Protestant who has, as they say, grown—and grown and grown. Some of the chapter titles are: Do Christians Promote Gay-Bashing? Is Proposition 187 Christian? Does God Have a Feminine Side? Should Christians Support Gun Control? Be assured, you already know his answers. The author says of this silly book, "I suppose I would be less ready to address many of the concerns in this book if I heard other voices articulating the ideas I have tried to express here. But I have not." The only possible explanation for that is that Mr. Campolo does more writing and speaking than reading and listening.

REINVESTING IN AMERICA. By ROBIN GARR. *Addison Wesley. 271 pp. $23.*

Some people talk about welfare reform; others are out there meeting human needs and, most importantly, changing lives. The subtitle tells the story: "The Grassroots Movements That Are Feeding the Hungry, Housing the Homeless, and Putting Americans Back to Work." The author is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who traveled the country to find examples of local projects that really work. Although his concern is with narrative rather than theory, the tales he tells powerfully support the "medi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ating structures" approach to social problems, and underscore the importance of religion in transforming the way people live. Fast-paced and engaging, this book is definitely on the right track.

THE MAD AMONG US. By GERALD N. GROB. *Harvard University Press. 386 pp. $16.95 paper.*

An admirably comprehensive account of the history of the care of the mentally ill in the United States, more admirable for the modesty of its claims. The delusive pursuit of a "cure" for mental illness, says the author, led to the exaggerated claims for institutionalization in the last century and, since World War II, has contributed to the de-institutionalizing policies that have left innumerable "homeless" wandering the streets of America. Grob, professor of history at Rutgers, comes up with no solution, except perhaps for recognizing that there is no definitive solution for the problems of a population that continues to have a moral claim upon the rest of society.

THE CATHOLIC PHILANTHROPIC TRADITION IN AMERICA. By MARY J. OATES. *Indiana University Press. 231 pp. $27.95.*

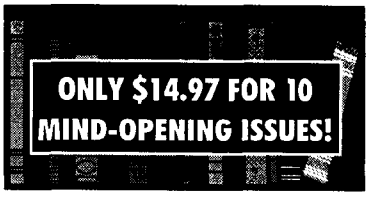
In the last century and first part of this one, Catholics established the largest network of charitable institutions in the nation. Oates contends that that great achievement has been weakened in recent decades by depersonalized and often secular forms of fund-raising that have reduced popular participation and commitment to these institutions. The argument would be conceptually stronger by attending to the now large literature on such institutions as "mediating structures," and politically more pertinent by addressing the dependence of such charitable efforts on government funding. Nonetheless, this is a valuable study that should occasion long second thoughts about the centralizing and secularizing dynamics that have resulted in institutions being both less Catholic and less effective in meeting human needs.

Introduce a Student to a Whole New World of Challenging Ideas!

GIVE A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION AT OUR LOW STUDENT RATE

College or seminary is a good start. Now it's time to let FIRST THINGS open the doors to a "higher education" in religion, ethics, and other great issues of our common life. Our reduced student rate makes it easier than ever to send 10 thought-provoking issues of FIRST THINGS to your favorite student(s). One year is only $14.97 -- more than $14 off the basic rate.

Don't wait! Give a gift that will engage a young mind. Send in the special savings coupon attached.



FIRST THINGS STUDENT GIFT SAVINGS COUPON

YES! Send one year (10 issues) of FIRST THINGS to the student below for only $14.97 which is more than $14 off the regular subscription price.
☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me ○ Charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
Card #_____ Expiration Date_____
Please add $6 to foreign orders. Students will receive a handsome gift card announcing your gift.

YOUR NAME _____ STUDENT NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ 6196

Please mail this coupon to FIRST THINGS, P.O. Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834-9847

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

John Paul II Plays "The Capital of the World"

In a rare departure from the utter originality of these pages, parts of this commentary appeared in the Wall Street Journal *and other publications here and abroad. So you never recycle?* — RJN

In an interview with a network news program, I was explaining what the forthcoming visit of the Holy Father meant for Catholics. "Yes," said the interviewer, who was a Protestant, "but why are *we* so excited about it? It wasn't like this before." She's right, it wasn't like this before. I sensed among journalists a new determination to get "the pope story" right this time. I even ran into reporters who had actually read encyclicals such as *Veritatis Splendor* (The Splendor of Truth) and *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life).

This new attitude among reporters reflected a much more general sense of heightened expectation as the Pope made his way to New York City, the city that he has called "the capital of the world." He came, he was seen, and he conquered. And, of course, he was heard. But was he *really* heard? Will the message have any long-term effect? One somewhat jaded journalist said as the Pope's plane took off for the return trip to Rome, "John Paul is yesterday's news. Now we turn the page to tomorrow's story."

Maybe he's right, but most observers disagree. The sense here is that something unprecedented and astonishing happened. New York City may not be the capital of the world, but it is certainly the capital of global communications, and people who have been around for a very long time say that they cannot remember a time when the press and broadcast media worked in such concert to capture every word and gesture of a visitor, as well as the variety of enthusiastic responses to his person and message. As for how much difference all this will make, Christians trust the promise of the prophet, "The word will not return void" (Isaiah 55). But even those who do not take their cue from biblical promise express the feeling that the papal visit represents a turning point in the American perception (or at least the New York perception) of this pope, of the Catholic Church, and maybe of the importance of religion in our common life.

The sin of intellectual sloth is at least as pervasive in journalism as in any other human enterprise, and reporters in the past have generally fallen back on two taken-for-granted "story lines" about this pontificate. The first, in the period immediately following his election, was that of a young (for a pope), dynamic leader, the first non-Italian in centuries, confronting the "evil empire" of communism. That was quickly succeeded by the second story line that has dominated the news coverage: a conservative, indeed reactionary, pope who is trying to clamp down on the changes initiated by the Second Vatican Council and restore authoritarian uniformity to a once monolithic Catholicism now badly fractured. Especially in the United States, the standard picture we have been given is that of an authoritarian leader who, when it comes to the realities of the modern world, "just doesn't get it."

In that second story line, Catholics in America are depicted as bright, independent progressives who are profoundly alienated from the old-fashioned ways of their antiquated Church. Reporters sometimes express genuine surprise when they encounter the vibrancy and faithfulness that is also powerfully evident among Catholics in this country. Thus, in a profile of Mary Ann Glendon, the Harvard law professor who headed the Holy See's delegation to the United Nations conference on women in Beijing, the *New York Times* noted that she "still attends Mass regularly." That "still" speaks volumes.

Among reporters in thrall to the second story line, almost all the questions are about sex, gender, and politics. Contraception gets a big play, as do the Church's "rigid" positions on homosexuality and abortion. And why doesn't the Pope "change the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Church's policy" on ordaining women to the priesthood? For those who interpret the world according to a political paradigm, it is very difficult to understand that the Pope is not the leader of a political party but the servant of a tradition that understands itself to be the bearer of truth revealed by God. Among journalists who are trained to be skeptical, who are often incapable of being skeptical about the limits of skepticism, Pilate's question is taken to be the mark of sophistication: "What is truth?" On this visit, too, there was reporting that never rose above the American preoccupation (maybe the human preoccupation) with sex and power. But, in general, the coverage moved beyond the old story lines.

It Began Earlier

For some reporters, the change began with the World Youth Day in Denver two years ago. The Denver coverage began with a script straight out of the second story line, but half-way into the event reporters began to have second thoughts; a note of puzzlement, of respect, and even of occasional reverence began to sneak into the evening news. Here were these hundreds of thousands of intense, well-behaved young people fervently hanging on every word of a septuagenarian Polish priest who challenged them to settle for nothing less than spiritual and moral greatness. And then there was the World Youth Day in Manila, bringing together the largest gathering of human beings in the history of the planet.

There were other factors. "Everybody knew" that American Catholics are in wholesale dissent and don't give a fig about the Church's teaching, but then they rushed out by the millions to buy a huge eight-hundred-page volume with the decidedly non-sexy title of *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* The same happened with a book of papal ponderings, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope,* on topics not usually found at the checkout counter, such as Husserl's phenomenological account of human nature and the role of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* in shaping modern subjectivism. It was all very puzzling indeed. Suddenly, secular thinkers who were accustomed to holding forth on "the real world" were beset by the troubling suspicion that maybe they were the ones who just didn't get it.

But here is what I think is really happening. Beyond the crowds, the media hype, the book sales, and the fascination with the ever so "colorful" worlds of Catholicism is the dawning awareness that, at the end of the twentieth century, at the edge of the Third Millennium, there is simply nobody else on the stage of world history. The realization grows, also among the media, that at the end of what has been a slum of a century here is a man who has a spiritually and morally compelling vision of the human future, and no other world figure or world movement does.

To be sure, everyday politics entered into much of the coverage of the Pope's visit. From John Paul's remarks at Newark airport through his farewell in Baltimore, some reporters declared that they had made a great discovery. The Pope is a liberal!

Not on internal church matters, of course, and not on abortion and questions sexual. But on most political questions, the Pope is, we were told again and again, "on the left of the spectrum." Many reporters went further, depicting the papal visit as almost a part of the Democratic campaign strategy. President Clinton, who has alienated Catholic voters on abortion and other questions, was embarrassingly aggressive in his efforts to be seen with the Pope in public. Against the Republican ascendancy, reporters said, the Pope came out foursquare for the United Nations, open immigration, the welfare state, and people with AIDS. Former governor Mario Cuomo of New York, with his characteristic delicacy, put it this way: "If you are a Republican conservative Catholic and your Pope says you are behaving like this to the poor, you'd have to think twice. That's all you need to get rid of Newt Gingrich."

In Search of an Imprimatur

The claim that the Vicar of Christ so forcefully injected himself into the policy particulars of American politics is not very believable. What is believable, what is undoubtedly the case, is that liberals are desperately in search of a moral imprimatur to revive their drooping fortunes.

It is true that the Pope called on America to be a "hospitable society." The phrase is borrowed from the pro-life movement and means that we are to care for the "stranger in the womb," the handicapped, the aged, and others against whom we are tempted to harden our hearts, including the immigrant. So there is some truth to the claim that John Paul's words on the "hospitable society" support liberals who are opposing Republican efforts to restrict immigration to the country, which is now at the level of a little over one million people each year.

As for the UN, however, his speech there might more accurately be described as a sharp criticism of that body. The Vatican has been a strong supporter of the UN from its beginnings, but proponents of world government will find naught for their comfort in the Pope's carefully crafted address. The Pope called on the UN to rise above its bureaucratic obsessions and pretensions to global power in order to become a forum of "moral deliberation" among the nations. Most strikingly, he offered a trenchant argument for the universality of human rights, a position frequently attacked under the auspices of the UN, as at the Cairo conference in 1994 and at the September 1995 conference on women in Beijing.

As for the welfare state, John Paul's strong criticisms of excessive state action are spelled out in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

detail in his 1991 encyclical "Centesimus Annus" (The Hundredth Year). Everything he said on this visit was entirely consistent with what he says there. At the Mass in Central Park, for instance, he said not to the Government but to every one in the huge crowd, "Christ wants you to go many places in the world, and to enter many hearts through you. Just as Mary visited Elizabeth, so you too are called to 'visit' the needs of the poor, the hungry, the homeless, those who are alone or ill; for example, those suffering from AIDS. You are called to stand up for life."

Judgment and Love

To suggest that the Pope was taking a position one way or the other on Republican proposals for welfare reform is as unbelievable as the claim that his compassion for those with AIDS reflects a change in the Church's censure of the homosexual acts associated with that dread disease. In *Centesimus Annus* and elsewhere, John Paul's emphasis is on "the subjectivity of society," meaning that individuals and the intermediate institutions—families, churches, voluntary associations—bear the primary responsibility for helping those in need.

The language of compassion and caring is the vocabulary of the Christian tradition and it eludes capture by any partisan cause. The parable of the Good Samaritan did not come out of a Democratic focus group. In the Archdiocese of New York and elsewhere, for example, the Catholic Church is in the forefront of those caring for people with AIDS, without in any way compromising the teaching that homosexuality is "objectively disordered" and homosexual acts are sinful. Both censure and compassion are grounded in moral truth, a concept that is alien to many who are steeped in a culture of relativism.

So how to explain this attempted hijacking of the Pope for the liberal cause? Part of the answer is obvious partisan expediency, an effort to exploit the popularity and moral credibility of John Paul II. More important is the disinclination, maybe inability, of many in the media to recognize that some things cannot be contained within the paradigms of power and politics. The Pope is not advancing an ideology, never mind a political program. He sets forth a universal moral teaching by which all ideologies and programs are to be judged, whether of the left or of the right. At least that is certainly what he believes he is doing.

In addition to overt partisan exploitation, however, there is among most reporters an entrenched mindset that associates caring with the left. Typically, reporters hear the word "love" and think the word "liberal." They hear the exhortation to help those in need and think the need for a government program. They perhaps know that conservative churchgoers rank highest in voluntary service to others, but voluntarism doesn't count. It does not relieve the itch of the collective "we" to "do something." The Pope says, "Christ wants you to visit the poor," and the liberal resolves to make the trip by sending tax dollars, preferably the tax dollars of "the rich."

The political hijacking of John Paul's message is not necessarily deliberate. It frequently happens that people are simply not speaking the same language. This recently came home to me in a network television interview. Asked about gays, the divorced, and people living together outside marriage, I assured the interviewer that they were all welcome in the Church, that the Church is a community of sinners attempting, always with great difficulty, to live the life of holiness to which we are called. The interviewer protested that I was giving a very "liberal" version of the Church's teaching, and I assured her that everything I said is unquestionably orthodox. "Well, I am sure this will confuse some of our viewers," she opined, "because, if I understand you right, you're saying that these people can be forgiven."

To her it seemed obvious that forgiving is what liberals do. Behind that, I suspect, is the assumption that forgiving means excusing. The idea that one could be so "intolerant" as to hold people morally accountable for their behavior and still love them was quite beyond her ken. As it is beyond the ken of others that caring about the poor does not necessarily require getting rid of Mr. Gingrich.

The Pope is unfazed. He is accustomed to attempted hijackings. Calmly and clearly, he sets forth the message. For instance, this at the Mass in Central Park: "Love makes you reach out to others in need, whoever they are, wherever they are. Every genuine human love is a reflection of the love that is God Himself, to the point where St. John says, 'The man without love has known nothing of God, for God is love.'"

Any effort to recruit that message for the purposes of partisan politics of the left or of the right is dishonest, trivializing, and, if we are still capable of understanding the word, blasphemous. On the other hand, it is also understandable. When there is something so big as this papal visit to the "Big Apple," it is not surprising that everybody, including politicians, wants to get, as they say, "a piece of the action."

Where We Are

One must in fairness say that the media coverage generally rose above that kind of self-interested bias. Like the massive response of people from every walk of life and every religious persuasion, the tone was one of listening—intensely, respectfully, even reverently. Here was a man who represented something hopeful in a world that is running short of hope.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Consider where we are. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Western civilization was supremely confident that reason, science, and technology, guided by the god named Progress, was ushering in the long-sought utopia of perpetual peace and prosperity. Then came 1914 and what was called the Great War, when, as it was said, the lights went out all over the world. Then came the Bolshevik putsch of 1917, then came Hitler and the Holocaust, then came the Cold War and nuclear weaponry that threatened to obliterate life on the planet. As the century that heaped up mountains of corpses and loosed rivers of blood now comes to an end, the ideological idols of humanity's prideful ambition lie scattered in the rubble. Then from the midst of the rubble there stands forth a man who says to the Church, who says to the world, "Be not afraid!"

That of course was the theme of his very first homily as pope, back in October 1978, and it has been repeated again and again throughout this pontificate. "Be not afraid!" It is not a message of optimism. This pope is no optimist. It is a message of hope from a man who has looked long and unblinkingly at all the reasons for giving up hope. He knows all about what in *Evangelium Vitae* he calls "the culture of death." He lived through Nazism, he lived through communism, and he probably has more knowledge than any person alive of all the horrors around the world that defy hopefulness about the human future.

He dares to say "Be not afraid!" because it is not his message. It is the message of the Risen Christ to disciples devastated by the unfathomable catastrophe of the cross. There is another theme that has been repeated a thousand times in this pontificate: "Open the doors to Christ!" In the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (The Mission of the Redeemer), John Paul invited us to envision the twenty-first century as the century of the greatest missionary expansion in Christian history. "The Church imposes nothing," he wrote, "the Church only proposes." But what a proposal! It is a proposal that includes all Christians, as he made clear in the encyclical earlier this year, *Ut Unum Sint* (That They May All Be One). And it includes not only Christians, for it has been a constant theme of this pope's teaching that Jesus Christ is nothing less than the future of humanity.

Do I believe that all this was understood by the reporters and the millions of people who watched and listened during the Pope's visit to "the capital of the world"? Not by a long shot. But this visit made it clear beyond doubt that the story lines of the past are pathetically incapable of communicating the significance of the person and pontificate of John Paul II.

After the visit, I talked again with the Protestant reporter who asked why she and others were so excited about the Pope's coming. "I think I have the answer now," she said. "You look at the world today, and you have to ask yourself the question, Who else is there?" That's not the complete answer, but it is a very important part of the answer.

FT

How Very Episcopalian

Touchy, touchy. That was my first response to a number of letters vigorously protesting "An Anglo-Catholic Hereafter" (October 1995). On second thought, however, the protesters have a point, indeed several points. I have in these pages been joshing Anglicans somewhat out of proportion to other communions. I have not taken adequate note of the fact that the goings-on in the Episcopal Church in this country are not necessarily representative of the Anglican communion, which is in largest part not British-American and is in places such as Africa vibrantly alive and growing. And I have seriously overestimated the appetite of at least some Anglicans for what is intended as humorous comment on their part of the household of faith. For all that and more, my apologies.

Having gotten that out of the way, I should say that some of the letters were both gracious and informative. For instance, Fr. W. L. Prehn of San Antonio, Texas, makes a grammatical point of which I was aware but sometimes forget. "One last thing: It really is as okay to make fun of Anglicans or Anglo-Catholics as it is for us to make fun of Papists (and, believe me, there's a 'seasoning of envy' for us too!). But when doing so, *always* remember that 'Episcopalian' is not and can never be an adjective. 'Episcopalian' is *always* a *noun*. Our descriptive adjective is *Episcopal*, so that a correct usage would be 'I am Episcopal,' or 'I am an Episcopalian;' but 'I am Episcopalian' is never correct. ('I am Anglican' is the best way to put it.) Likewise, our theology and beliefs would be *Episcopal* and never 'Episcopalian.' This is not always known, even by Episcopalians who should know better. For example, one of our far western bishops has spoken and written of 'Episcopalianism.' What he means of course is 'Episcopal beliefs,' or he ought rather to say, simply, '*Anglicanism*.' 'Anglicanism' is by definition the 'doctrine and ethos' of the Episcopal Church and the entire Anglican Communion."

To which some reader is saying, "How very Episcopal," and wondering why that doesn't sound quite right. The reason it does not sound right, of course, is that "How very episcopal," outside the American Anglican context, means that it is the kind

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of thing you might expect from a bishop. But the reader in question intends to say something about Episcopalianism. And for that purpose he and others—despite Fr. Prehn's instruction (with which I would not argue for a moment)—will probably continue to say, "How very Episcopalian." It would never occur to me, as a Roman Catholic, to say that having a refined sense of humor is an episcopal characteristic. It is certainly very Episcopalian, however. Of course matters are clarified if "episcopal" is upper case, but in everyday usage most people have difficulty with pronouncing the upper case.

FT

AGAINST VALUES

Josef Goebbels is supposed to have said, "When I hear the word 'culture,' I reach for my Luger." Good words are always susceptible to being coopted and put in service to bad ends. (Although in the case of Goebbels, he opposed the good ends served by culture.) Spirituality is such a word these days. When you hear someone mention spirituality, reach for your Bible. Similarly, in the last five years almost all talk about angels has been twisted and trivialized to feed the insatiable appetites of the religiosity market. That loud whooshing sound is the cultural vacuum sucking up the riches of the Christian tradition. And not only the Christian tradition. Consider the word "values." There is a bull market in values. Bill Bennett's publisher wanted him to call it *The Book of Values*. Fortunately, he had better sense than that.

We create values. Values are simply what we value. You have yours and I have mine, and neither can make a claim on the other, except to be tolerant. Almost thirty years ago, Allan Bloom, in the introduction to his translation of *The Republic*, criticized H. D .P. Lee's translation of Plato's phrase, "examining the beautiful and the good." Lee translated that as "discussing moral values." Bloom wrote: "In fact, 'values' in this sense is a usage of German origin popularized by sociologists in the last seventy-five years. Implicit in this usage is the distinction between 'facts and values' and the consequence that ends or goals are not based on facts but are mere individual subjective preferences or, at most, ideal creations of the human spirit. Whether the translator intends it or not, the word 'values' conjures up a series of thoughts which are alien to Plato. Every school child knows that values are relative, and thus that the Plato who seems to derive them from facts, or treat them as facts themselves, is unsophisticated. When the case is prejudged for him in this way, how could the student ever find out that there was once another way of looking at these things that had some plausibility? The text becomes a mirror in which he sees only himself. Or, as Nietzsche put it, the scholars dig up what they themselves buried."

Iain T. Benson of British Columbia, who heads the Centre for Renewal in Public Policy, has brought to our attention an instance of "values talk" in a rather surprising context—the writings of John Paul II, or at least in the English translations of the same. This happens at several points, for instance, in the encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*. Thus the phrase "the fountain and origin of goods" (*bonorum fons et origo*) is translated "the source of values." So, too, in *Evangelium Vitae*, the English speaks of promoting "values" in law where the Latin speaks of promoting the good (*bonum*). This pattern of mistranslation is particularly unfortunate in view of the fact that both documents are centrally concerned about combatting "the ethical relativism which characterizes much of contemporary culture" (*Evangelium Vitae*, 70). As Allan Bloom might put it, the text becomes a mirror of the distortion it intends to counter.

FT

WHEN TOLERANCE IS NO LONGER TOLERABLE

Toward the end of an *annus horribilis* that has left the Episcopal Church shaking from top to bottom, the House of Bishops, meeting in Portland, Oregon, has forced another division by voting overwhelmingly (122 yes, 17 no, 18 abstaining) to mandate the ordination of women in all its dioceses. Four dioceses and many more parishes had opposed the ordination of women on theological grounds. The 1976 agreement on ordaining women contained what were said to be guarantees protecting those who had conscientious objections to the change. But now the patience of the majority has clearly run out. The women bishops in the House were vocal in asserting that the time for debate and tolerance had expired. "The church has made a decision to end discrimination," said Bishop Mary Adelia McLeod of Vermont. "I ask you to affirm that."

In the 1970s, when women's ordination was being agitated, it was a running story on the front pages and the evening news. The Portland decision to quash dissent on the question rated a few inches on page eighteen of the *New York Times*. Maybe

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

because "Episcopal intolerance" doesn't fit any established story line. Maybe because most reporters think putting up with dissent for almost twenty years is evidence of Episcopal tolerance. Maybe because the Episcopal Church, after years of drift and decline, is no longer news.

In any event, demonstrating its devotion to nondiscrimination, the House set aside famed Anglican "inclusiveness" and gave dissenting bishops twenty-seven months to conform or take the consequences. One dissenter, Donald Parsons, the retired bishop of Quincy, Illinois, declared, with less than ecumenical sensitivity, "The resolution is entirely un-Anglican and totally Roman." Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, one of the resisting dioceses, said, "The vote was so one-sided here that 1997 will probably be the end for a lot of people in the church." The General Convention of the church is scheduled for 1997, and Wantland indicated that the liberal tide is now so strong as to make likely the passage of many other measures, including the formal approval of homosexual behavior.

Wantland and five other bishops issued a statement asserting that the action of the House "is a denial of the basic Anglican principle that the church cannot demand that which cannot be proven from the plain teaching of Scripture. A Catholic theological position universally held for almost 2,000 years, and still embraced by a majority of the Anglican communion, will have been banished from the life and practice of this church. . . . Clearly, this threat and this action create a new level of impaired communion, subverting the collegiality of the House, and guaranteeing, for the first time in history, that the Episcopal Church will actively prohibit Catholic order." They conclude, "We reaffirm our own total commitment to the Catholic order and faith, even in the face of a coming persecution. We will not abandon the faithful, no matter the cost."

Shortly before the Church of England approved the ordination of women, the Archbishop of Canterbury declared that opposition to the proposal was "heresy." He publicly stepped back from that later, but his remark reflects the mindset of many who first plead that their disagreement with established teaching should be tolerated, and then, having gained toleration, move on to prohibit what had formerly been established teaching and practice. It is a problem facing any church body in which matters of doctrine cannot be appealed beyond democratic procedure. Tolerance will not suffice when deep interests are at stake. The problem is hardly limited to the ordination of women. Where orthodoxy is optional, orthodoxy will sooner or later be proscribed.

FT

HE WHO STEALS MY WORDS . . .

When you steal from one author, it's plagiarism; if you steal from many, it's research. I wish I had said that, but it was in fact said by the noted wit Wilson Mizner (d. 1933). Plagiarism in its various forms seems to be getting renewed attention these days. A writer does a devastating article on the doleful effects of affirmative action in hiring and promotions at the *Washington Post*, and the *Post* management fires back that the writer is a charlatan and well-known plagiarist. She did admit to an error a while back in using some lines she found in her computer that she thought were hers but in fact had been borrowed from someone else. It is very doubtful that that qualifies as plagiarism. Since they were not able to refute the article, the *Post* editors were desperate to discredit its author. Among writers the charge of plagiarism is powerful; it is comparable to the potency in today's social climate of being accused of the sexual abuse of minors.

I've always been somewhat relaxed about this question of literary borrowings. After all, is it not said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery? I assiduously make a point of attributing to the source anything I'm aware of borrowing, but mainly because I would be embarrassed to have somebody find me out. When people tell me that they've "stolen" something from me for a speech or newsletter, my response is that they're welcome to steal anything worth stealing. Not so with Dennis Prager, editor of *Ultimate Issues*. When people tell him that they stole something he wrote, he responds, "That makes you a thief, and you should repent." That seems a bit heavy, but Mr. Prager and others have prompted me to rethink the merits of their view.

There is the moral question of, among other things, property rights. The formidable Florence King has convincingly demonstrated that another Southern writer, Molly Ivins, has lifted her material without attribution, and changed material that she does attribute to Miss King. "If we had the right kind of laws in this country," said Miss King, "I'd challenge her to a duel over this." Miss Ivins, to her credit, has fessed up and apologized. Miss King is not entirely mollified. (It is a distinguishing mark of her writing that she is seldom mollified about anything.) In a letter to Miss Ivins published in the *American Enterprise*, Miss King notes that the *Washington Post*'s story on their little scrap talks about the Ivins "side" and the King "side" of the unpleasantness. Miss King writes, "How can there be a 'side' in this when everyone involved is either a writer or an editor? All of us, by definition, are on the same side—the word side. Every word I write is a piece of my heart, and I presume you feel the same way."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That is putting it too strongly. In my case it would mean that I have, after more than twenty books and probably two thousand published articles and reviews, quite lost my heart, for I cannot remember most of the words I have written. But there is that question of property rights. At a recent conference in Oxford, I ran across a fellow who has been giving his attention to plagiarism in the writings of Gilbert Keith Chesterton. GKC said some brilliant things about plagiarism, as he did about almost everything, but he seems to have been rather casual about his borrowings, and got through a stunningly prolific life without the bother of even one footnote. If one reveres GKC as much as I do, the Oxford don's research might seem to be a quibbling not untouched by sacrilege. Knowing that there's nothing new under the sun, it seems probable that few of us have ever written anything that is genuinely original, so why not celebrate someone like Chesterton who repackaged so very originally? On the other hand . . .

A Careless Corruption

King, Prager, and others are right: there is something corrupting in careless borrowing. Words are the only property that writers, qua writers, possess. And property is an integral part of personal identity and responsibility. While writers who write a great deal may not remember all their words, there are what might be called signature phrases that signal their public identity. Of course one is more aware of this in connection with writers with whom one is closely associated. "A rumor of angels," for example, is a signature phrase for Peter Berger. Similarly, "rights talk" signals Mary Ann Glendon. There are numerous other examples. Yet in books and articles I have run across authors using these phrases as though they had cooked them up themselves. That is not right for many reasons, and not least because, in the mind of attentive readers, it discredits writers who do it.

If one pays attention to the writing of one's friends, it is as nothing compared to the attention one pays one's own writing. I, perhaps immodestly, assume that I have a signature phrase or two. For instance, "the Catholic moment," "the naked public square," "politics is in largest part a function of culture . . ." (long-time readers can fill in the rest of the formula from memory), and so forth. One sees these phrases appearing without attribution, and it is not always amusing. In the book of a distinguished political philosopher, we are offered an extended discussion of religion and the First Amendment, and it concludes with this: "I would go so far as to describe this exclusion of religion from our common discourse as the creation of a naked public square." He did not have to go very far at all—only to the book of that title, which is not cited in his notes, and from which he also lifted, almost without change, entire paragraphs. I am not inclined to sue and, unlike Miss King, I'm not up to dueling, but, if it weren't for the flattery implied, I would just as soon people didn't do that sort of thing.

Corruption Convoluted

The embarrassment factor gets awfully convoluted. In a recent book, an author attributes one of my signature phrases to another writer, and then conscientiously notes in his critical apparatus that "the phrase is sometimes attributed to Richard John Neuhaus," even though the writer he is quoting, in the notes to the very text under discussion, attributes the phrase to me. So is there an element of sinful pride in my being a mite irritated? Of course. But beyond that, for people who write about ideas and their consequences, there is the not unimportant matter of getting the story right.

One more example and I'll get off this kick. A few years ago, a reporter for the *New York Times* made the interesting observation that, in the abortion controversy, pro-choice people talk about "rights and laws" while pro-lifers talk about "rights and wrongs." I thought that suggestive and developed it, with attribution, in these pages. Later, another writer whom I will call Smith used my developed version, without citing his source, after which yet another writer told me that the original *Times* reporter was plagiarizing from Smith. All this may seem trivial to more normal folk, but writers and editors cannot help but follow the fortunes and misfortunes of their words. And it happens that we sometimes lose track. The words and signature phrases of others end up in our own heads and seem so very at home that we come to believe they were born there.

It happens also that words insinuate themselves into everyday discourse in such a way that it never occurs to people that there is a source to be cited. When, for instance, presidents and other public figures go on about the naked public square, I confess to a slight twitch of proprietorial pride. Writers, poor souls, must take their satisfactions where they can. It's different when other writers do it, however. As Florence King says, we're on the same side—the words and ideas side—and there are rules to be observed. Unlike Dennis Prager, I am disinclined to call anyone a thief. But neither do I now say so insouciantly that, if it's worth stealing, go ahead and steal it. I have come to understand how important it is for people to publicly say thank you.

That assumes, of course, that you know that there is a source to be thanked. I fear I may be letting down the side when I entertain the suspicion that there really is nothing new under the sun, and some obscure nineteenth-century essayist may have written brilliantly about, for example, "the naked public square." It is even possible that years ago I read such a hypothetical essay and have quite

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forgotten where I got the phrase. So, just to be safe, to everybody on our side, to all the forgotten, misquoted, and unquoted scribblers in glory (and elsewhere): Thank you!

FT

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ A correction. In the November 1995 issue we commented on the discussion of the treatment of anencephalic babies at St. Louis University Medical Center. We mistakenly cited informed sources to the effect that abortions and other procedures contravening Catholic teaching were done at the Center. We misunderstood the information supplied us. Our sincere apologies.

■ Following a rash of incidents in which teachers, physicians, and others in authority have taken advantage of their position to have sex with minors, the *New York Times* has this story on the need to reconsider the age of consent. Having studied thirty-seven cultures and queried all kinds of people, David Buss, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan, proposes (*The Evolution of Desire*, Basic Books) that in all cultures people have tried to "interfere" with each other's sexuality primarily because women are competing for desirable men while men are competing for desirable women. In the U.S., he says, where "socially imposed monogamy" pits the fourteen-year-old girl against the thirty-year-old woman, it is in the adult's interest to maintain that adult-adolescent liaisons are immoral. "Sexual morality becomes fascinating from this perspective," he says, "since what is moral depends on whose interests are being served." Strange how morality as will-to-power keeps getting rediscovered. Also very convenient, of course, for those with power. That a moral rule protects thirty-year-old women from being discarded and fourteen-year-old girls from being exploited might, one dares to think, suggest that the rule makes sense; maybe that it is even, well, true. But those in charge of what is laughably called higher education would not likely find that perspective so "fascinating."

■ Commenting on the 1992 *Casey* decision of the Supreme Court, we wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that "lawless law is an invitation to lawlessness." David Smolin takes up that theme in an intriguing article in the *Baylor Law Review*. "Rev. Neuhaus represents the mainstream, rather than the fringes, of American theologically conservative theism. . . . Calling *Roe* and *Casey* and the Supreme Court 'lawless' is mainstream, rather than radical, among the one-third or more of Americans within the worlds of theologically conservative theism." We confess it is a discomforting experience to be called mainstream, even if mainstream of a one-third minority. But the more interesting part of Smolin's article is his view of the probable future facing what he calls the religious patriotism of the pro-life movement, and of "the religious right" in general. We are by no means prepared to say that he is right, but his conclusion bears pondering: "The difficulty with the religious right is that it cannot succeed. The religious right may succeed in preventing abortion from being mainstreamed as a social good; it may succeed in pushing America in a more libertarian, less regulatory, direction. The religious right cannot make America Christian or virtuous; at most, it can give individuals and groups more room to choose to be Christian or virtuous. The American people live within the cultural revolution as a fish lives in water; to expect politics to undo the cultural revolution is like expecting a baseball team to win the Presidential election. The cultural revolution is imbedded in the cultural forces of family breakdown, mass media, and 'secular' education, and therefore will not give way merely because of legislative decree or political leadership. The religious right lacks, at present, an adequate *cultural* strategy for combatting the cultural revolution. Thus, the time will come when the Christian Coalition, like the Moral Majority before it, will have to face up to its failure to achieve the goal of 'reclaiming' America. The frustrated religious patriotism of traditionalist theists therefore must stem into other branches besides murder and impossible political dreams. In the end, there seem to be two primary options: either the religion will accommodate itself to the patriotism, or the patriotism will give way to the religion. Some will drift away from traditionalist theism to a religion that can accept *Roe* and still be proud of America. It may be enough, in the end, for many in the Christian Coalition to maintain a libertarian, rather than a moral, America. Few in the religious right seemed to notice that the country became, during the Reagan-Bush era, less, rather than more, moral, according to traditionalist Christian standards. Some may be satisfied to see politically conservative 'Christians,' or at least Republicans, in power and giving voice to virtue and God, even as the culture sinks deeper into moral depravity. In this way Christian patriotism will be tamed, as conservative Christians discover that America can be a great nation even with a 30 percent abortion rate and 50 percent divorce rate. Others, however, will cling to traditionalist theism; ultimately, they will have to reject patriotism. These traditionalists will look beyond the politics and even the laws of America, to the behavior of Americans: to our rates of abortion, divorce, murder, rape, theft, and illegitimacy; to the glorification of violence and sexual immorality in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our media; to the constantly shrinking evidence of virtues such as patience, humility, generosity, faithfulness, honesty, kindness, and selfless love. If a significant portion of traditionalist theists reject patriotism, then traditionalist theists will join the underclass, and tribal Americans, as the newest of America's growing class of permanent political exiles. Once they accept that they are exiles, they will be peaceful; but they will no longer, as in years past, be willing to sacrifice for the country. Anti-abortion lawlessness is ugly, whatever one's position on abortion. It is but a passing thorn on a broad branch of disenchantment; no one can yet see what other thorns, leaves, or flowers that branch will grow."

■ At this recent conference, a theologian—he happened to be Methodist but the comment is denominationally generic—remarked that evangelization today requires addressing "the modern mind" with a message stripped of its primitive origins. On the flight back, I came across this by Gilbert Keith Chesterton, and wished I had had it in hand when responding to said theologian. It is from "The Doubts of Democracy" (1904): "If there really are some other and higher beings than ourselves, and if they, in some strange way, at some emotional crisis, really revealed themselves to rude poets or dreamers in very simple times, that these rude people should regard the revelation as local, and connect it with the particular hill or river where it happened, seems to me exactly what any reasonable human being would expect. It has a far more credible look than if they had talked cosmic philosophy from the beginning. If they had, I would have suspected 'priestcraft' and forgeries and third-century Gnosticism. If there be such a being as God, and He can speak to a child, and if God spoke to a child in the garden, the child would, of course, say that God lived in the garden. I should not think it any less likely to be true for that. If the child had said: 'God is everywhere; an impalpable essence pervading and supporting all constituents of the Cosmos alike'—if, I say, the infant addressed me in the above terms, I should think he was much more likely to have been with the governess than with God. So if Moses had said God was an Infinite Energy, I should be certain he had seen nothing extraordinary. As he said He was a Burning Bush, I think it very likely that he did see something extraordinary. For whatever be the Divine Secret, or whether or no it has (as all peoples have believed) sometimes broken bounds and surged into our world, at least it lies on the side furthest away from pedants and their definitions, and nearest to the silver souls of quiet people, to the beauty of bushes, and the love of one's native place. . . . When the learned sceptic says: 'The visions of the Old Testament were local, and rustic, and grotesque,' we shall answer, 'Of course. They were genuine.'"

■ Pop spirituality is flourishing in America, says J. Budziszewski, a frequent contributor to these pages, but it is run by the ABC rule: "Anything but Christianity." Reviewing two new books, one by Robert Fulghum and the other by M. Scott Peck, he notes that they reflect the condition of folk who hang around the vestibule of Christianity, not quite in and not quite out. Budziszewski says he has passed through the portal both leaving and returning, and he worries about Fulghum, a Unitarian minister, who is clearly on his way out, and Peck who is, just maybe, thinking about going in. "So it is that two such different authors, one a refugee from fundamentalism and the other just arrived from Zen, converge at the gate and pause. Contemporary American pop spirituality is a theology of lingering, of loitering, of hesitation, a religion of the vestibule. It wants connectedness without commitment, reconciliation without repentance, and sacredness without sanctity. It wants to sing the songs of Zion in the temples of Ishtar and Brahman. God help us to know what we want and to want what we ought. God make haste to help us; God make speed to save us."

■ Writing in *Civilization*, the magazine of the Library of Congress, Gerald Early of Washington University, St. Louis, has an interesting take on Afrocentrism. "The tragedy is that black people fail to see their 'Americanization' as one of the great human triumphs of the past five hundred years. The United States is virtually the only country where the ex-masters and the ex-slaves try to live together as equals, not only by consent of the ex-masters but by the demand of the ex-slaves. Ironically, what the Afrocentrist can best hope for is precisely what multiculturalism offers: the idea that American culture is a blend of many white and nonwhite cultures. In the end, although many Afrocentrists claim they want this blending, multiculturalism will not satisfy. For if the Euro-American is reminded through this that he is not European or wholly white, the African-American will surely be reminded that he is not African or wholly black. The Afrocentrist does not wish to be a mongrel. He wants, like the Southerner, to be pure." Early seems to want to defend the liberal idea of individualism at least in a tempered form, but ends up with the reflection, "Black folk know, and rightly so, that their individual identities are tied to the strength of their community. The struggle over black identity in the United States has been the struggle over the creation of a true black community here." What a true black community (or a true Jewish community or a true Irish community, for that matter) might be he does not tell us, but it would seem to be at least as problematic as the Afrocentric yearning "to be pure."

■ "The Brief Statement" is a document that is more or less subscribed to by the Lutheran Church—Missouri

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Synod (LCMS). *Christian News,* which has included raw anti-Catholicism on its menu of causes championed, recently surprised us with this: "Lutherans, who want the LCMS to draw closer to the Roman Catholic Church, oppose the Brief Statement when it says that 'we subscribe to the statement of our Confessions that the Pope is "the very Antichrist."'" Is *Christian News* saying that Lutherans want the LCMS to draw closer to the Roman Catholic Church and therefore oppose the nasty things Lutherans have said about the Pope? That would be a welcome change of mind. The more probable reading, unfortunately, is that the editor's fondness for commas has him saying precisely the opposite of what he intended to say. Proofreaders beware.

■ Psychologists, never mind psychiatrists, have fallen upon hard times. American society is now awash in myriad psychotherapies, many of which "work" for people much more effectively, and much more cheaply, than those proffered by the high-priced experts who were once able to define psychotherapy. This is discussed by Lewis M. Andrews in "Religion's Challenge to Psychology" (*Public Interest,* Summer 1995). Andrews observes, "If there is any intellectual issue at stake for the conventional secular therapists, it is their growing lament that economic and religious forces may be combining to undercut certain schools of thought, especially psychoanalytic and other in-depth approaches, which they believe have made a positive and dynamic contribution to American culture. 'I worry especially,' says Jeremy Lazarus, chairman of the American Psychiatric Association's Committee on Managed Care, 'that we may have lost our ability to help those people in intellectual, artistic, and other creative fields.' Karen Stone, a Long Island psychologist who cochairs the Coalition of Mental Health Professionals and Consumers, a group opposed to managed care for mental health, expressed the fear of her colleagues when she recently told a *New York Times* reporter that current trends are 'destroying this field.' She went on to add parenthetically that 'nobody wants their kid to be a psychologist any more.'" The other and more disturbing side of that is that many become priests, ministers, and rabbis in order to be psychologists.

■ The Coalition for Pagan Religious Rights held a big fund-raiser at Christ Congregational Church in Silver Spring, Maryland. According to the *Washington Post,* the event attracted witches, priests, and priestesses galore, along with a crowd of the curious. Curses were cast, blessings were invoked, shamans mediated supernatural spookiness, and apparently almost everyone had a good time. Not everyone. According to the *Post,* "Some critics inside and outside the congregation have complained that playing host to pagan groups could reflect poorly on the church. . . . Dick Meyer, Christ Congregational's property administrator, said the church has provided space for community groups, including various pagan groups, but does not necessarily support their views." Not necessarily.

■ Back in the early sixties when I was an eager young Lutheran pastor in black Brooklyn, inner city ministry was all the thing. That has changed drastically in the last three decades. Today, as Edward Marciniak and William Droel write in an important article in *Chicago Studies,* an assignment to an inner city parish is frequently viewed as exile to a Third World country. Based on recent studies by the urban center of Loyola University, they argue ("The Future of Catholic Churches in the Inner City") that inner city churches, both Protestant and Catholic, may be coming back, and that is because, in Chicago, Denver, Cleveland, and elsewhere, urban centers are making a comeback. Among advocates of the urban poor, this is sometimes dismissively referred to as "gentrification," but Marciniak and Droel know that the very best thing for the poor is that they break out of their "radical isolation" (William Julius Wilson) to live in communities populated by people who represent an economic, educational, and professional mix. The article is one of the most suggestive statements on the future of the inner city church that I've seen in many a year, and I expect the authors would be glad to send you a copy if you enclose a dollar with your request to The National Center for the Laity, 205 West Monroe Street, Chicago, IL 60606.

■ A correction. In the August/September issue we reported on an extended discussion of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" that, we said, appeared in *Touchstone.* Several readers have pointed out that it appeared in the *Lookout,* an independent weekly in the Campbell-Stone tradition of the Churches of Christ. They're right, and we're sorry for any confusion caused.

■ It's not a secret, but I don't recall mentioning it before in print. In 1970, when a pastor in Brooklyn, I made the potentially disastrous decision to run for Congress. Actually, it was for the Democratic nomination, which in that district was tantamount to election. It was a very near thing. I've never seen anyone look incredulous, but I suspect some are, when I say that I've thanked God almost every day—well, almost every week—that I lost. Only weeks into the campaign, which was going frighteningly well, I knew that this was not where I belonged. Politics, and especially Washington politics, has for many years seemed to me oppressively dehumanizing, verging on the demonic. It's the all-pervasive corruption of self-importance. And yes, some of my best friends are deeply entangled in it and seem, mirabile dictu, still in possession of their souls. These reflections are prompted by a marvelous

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

article by Diane Ravitch, "Adventures in Wonderland" (*American Scholar*, Autumn 1995). It's worth a trip to the library. Ravitch was Assistant Secretary of Education under Lamar Alexander, and, while not in Congress, discovered that life in Washington is all about the power games "on the Hill." I will not attempt to summarize the article, but only say that it is not an unrelenting series of horror stories. Ravitch, an author of distinguished books on education, tells of her experience with considerable humor and graciousness. She ends on this note: "Two week after the 1992 election, I attended a gala dinner at the New York Public Library, where I was among a group of writers who were honored as 'Literary Lions.' I was still a government official and felt slightly illegitimate since the intensity of government work leaves little time for any writing other than speeches or an occasional article (which, so long as one is in a political job, has at least a strain of boilerplate). As I looked at the other writers, I reflected that we were being honored for what we had done on our own, without politics, without negotiation, without compromise, without pre-clearance, without deference to committees, commissions, or tethered minds. And I knew that night in which world I belonged." And so, with immeasurable relief, did I know that autumn night of 1970 when I learned that the late John Rooney would continue to represent Brooklyn's Fourteenth Congressional District on the Hill.

■ "Hume Backs Weakland's Speech" is the headline in the *National Catholic Reporter*. Some British cousins had protested to Cardinal Hume remarks made by Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee at a conference in Birmingham. Weakland said, as he has said so many times before, that the shortage of priests constitutes a crisis, and suggested once again that an answer may be to ordain married men and women. In response to the protesters, Hume issued a prepared statement: "The Cardinal would not wish to prevent from speaking a bishop whose continuing ministry as a bishop was supported by Rome." Some backing.

■ Quite a few sensible people are having difficulties with what Dinesh D'Souza says about race in his new book, *The End of Racism*. Glenn Loury of Boston University and Bob Woodson of the American Enterprise Institute, for instance. The former scorched it in a review in the new *Weekly Standard*, and the latter cut his ties with AEI for having sponsored the book. Both are black thinkers for whom we have great respect (Loury has contributed several splendid pieces to these pages). We will be returning to D'Souza's argument here. Meanwhile, the book is also being attacked by people who, it seems all unknowingly, confirm central parts of D'Souza's thesis. For instance, his suggestion that many white liberals who support the old civil rights establishment and failed welfare policies really believe that blacks are not capable of getting their own lives in order—or, put differently, that blacks are inferior. Here, for example, is that reliable lefty Joe Conason in the *New York Observer* railing against D'Souza's "heartless hypocrisy in promoting the notion that blacks should become 'unhyphenated Americans' who 'embrace mainstream cultural norms,' while proclaiming in the same breath that they will have to heal their devastated communities on their own. Does anyone truly believe they possess the necessary resources without government or private help?" A reader who did not know that Mr. Conason is a celebrated foe of racism might make the mistake of thinking the question betrays more than a hint of racism.

■ Here's a news release announcing that a Robert Gross, former Jesuit, has decided to "transfer his clergy credentials" from the Roman Catholic Church to the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), an outfit started some years ago to promote the Christian acceptance of homosexuality. Gross is the author of *Jesus ACTED UP* (HarperCollins). Have credentials, will travel.

■ The noted critic Frank Kermode discussed in the *New York Times Book Review* a study by a Harvard type of lesbianism, cross-dressing, and related antics in the history of Western culture. Kermode opined that it was all a decided bore and he wondered why people would devote their academic careers to such trash. Of course that provoked a rash of letters from outraged academics protesting that the editors should not have asked someone to review a subject in which he was not interested. It is an interesting question. That something is not interesting, that it is really beneath notice, is itself a legitimate critical judgment. But then why review the book at all? One answer is: Some people think the subject terribly important and they should be set straight. So I'm with Kermode and the editors on this one. Anything can be deconstructed, as clever adolescents have always known. Grownups should try to be patient with juvenile cleverness, but when the kids keep clamoring for attention and take over whole departments for their exhibitionist games, a line must be drawn. They should be told, nicely if possible, that what they are doing is not terribly interesting, and, if they don't get themselves under control, they might do some serious damage, not least to their own minds and souls. The damage is not the main point, however. The main point is that what they're doing is pretty dumb and quite unworthy of their own gifts. Frederick Turner of the University of Texas makes the point in the *American Arts Quarterly* (Spring 1995): "If indeed the disciplines of culture have been discredited (as postmodern aesthetics claims), so that there is no apprenticeship, no growing mastery in a difficult

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

technique or craft, and therefore none of the self-respect that comes of such training, no amount of 'self-esteem' flummery will make up for the loss." He illustrates the point this way: "Suppose sports were in the same condition as the postmodern arts and humanities. There would be a whole corpus of theory that attacked sports as traditional ways of suppressing and buying off the legitimate aspirations of the oppressed, that denigrated winning as a patriarchal and implicitly racist goal, that interpreted physical training as a sort of brainwashing of the body so as to enable the power elite to control individuals, that ridiculed the grace and the beauty of the human body in athletic activity, and undermined the aesthetic assumptions that make us value the agony and perfection of a close-fought game. The language of sport would be deconstructed, the structure of the game rules would be shown to be self-contradictory, the historical origins of sports would be shown to be bound up with slavery and colonialism. The viewing of sport would be interpreted as an act of sado-masturbatory violence, and its use of the human body as reification of the authentic free individual. Sports events would become deliberate exercises in clumsiness and chaos; players would be chosen for their hideous deformities, poor physical condition, and lack of coordination; the rules would be changed from moment to moment, and the crowd would be bombarded with excrement by the players and referees. The public would soon learn to shun such events, sports would get a reputation for being difficult to appreciate, and a National Endowment for Sports would be created in order to preserve our precious athletic heritage."

■ Reviewing the autobiography of postmodernist hero Paul Feyerabend in the *New Republic*, the prince of apostles among postmodernists, Richard Rorty, restates his position that there is no neutral or objective way of adjudicating disputes, "whether the issue is scientific truth or moral agency." It is a matter of disposition, of sensibility, and finally of faith. "Philosophers on the one side want something to rely on, something that is not subject to chance. Philosophers on the other side try to find ways of preserving most of common sense while keeping faith with Darwin: with the realization that our species, its faculties and its current scientific and moral languages, are as much products of chance as are tectonic plates and mutated viruses. They try to explain how social democrats can be better than Nazis, modern medicine better than voodoo, and Galileo better than the Inquisition, even though there are no neutral, transcultural, ahistorical criteria that dictate these rankings." It is really very touching. Mr. Rorty has found something to rely on, something that is not subject to chance, i.e., "keeping faith with Darwin."

■ "Experimenting with tradition since 1898." That's the entire message of an advertisement soliciting vocations to the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement in Garrison, N.Y. Why would anyone want to give his life to experimenting with tradition? One might want to live tradition, transmit tradition, teach tradition, be faithful to tradition—but experiment with tradition? It says a great deal about the religious culture of our time when it is suggested that the most interesting thing to do with tradition is to experiment with it. Anyway, what kind of tradition can it be after only ninety-seven years, especially when all that time has been spent fiddling around with it? Not surprisingly, the friars are not overwhelmed by new vocations. On the other hand, religious communities that are not in a perpetual state of wondering who they are demonstrate a powerful capacity to attract the commitment of others. Jesus did not say, "Come follow me, and we'll try to figure out where we're going." The invitation to join the Atonement Friars in experimenting with tradition is not likely to appeal to people who have something better to do with their lives. And yet endowment funds elicited in the days when the community knew it had a tradition to serve will likely keep the advertisements running until the last friar to leave turns out the lights and the experiment is formally concluded. It's been going on for centuries. Inspirations bring communities into being, they grow uncertain, tentative, and experimental, and then they evaporate and die, while new communities are born by the rediscovery of traditions worthy of being lived. There is even precedent for communities only ninety-seven years old experiencing such rediscovery and renewal.

■ According to the *Times* (London), Cardinal Maurice Otunga, Archbishop of Nairobi, has banned "Clinton" as a Christian name for Kenyans. "We cannot allow hero worship with no Christian significance to creep into our faith," he said. It seems improbable that any bishop or pastor in this country has felt the need to issue such a ban.

■ Chalk up another one for the Rutherford Institute. Several years ago we mentioned here the case of Beverly Schnell of Milwaukee, a fifty-year-old woman taking care of her ailing mother who advertised an apartment for rent in her house. She committed the great crime of saying she was looking for a "mature Christian handyman." The Milwaukee Fair Housing Council pounced on this blatant act of discrimination against women and non-Christians. Mrs. Schnell protested to no avail that she simply wanted someone who could help out with the maintenance of the house, and to her mind (also according to her dictionary) a Christian is a person of good character. Determined to see justice done, the state of Wisconsin found her guilty of discrimination and imposed fines and fees of almost

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

$10,000, which Mrs. Schnell, who works only part time, could in no way pay. The Rutherford Institute found a pro bono lawyer to defend her, the case attracted considerable publicity, Wisconsin got nervous and tried to get out of going to trial. They would drop the case if Mrs. Schnell went to sensitivity training and agreed not to discuss the case publicly. Mrs. Schnell, however, is eager to talk about the case and thinks a trial might be just the platform she needs. Obviously, it is the correctness constabulary of the state of Wisconsin that needs to be sent to sensitivity training, meaning a course in common decency.

■ Once upon a time, ever so long ago, Father Andrew Greeley, social scientist, did a study of the priesthood in the U.S. that was rejected by the American bishops. Fr. Greeley does not forget. In a recent column in the *National Catholic Reporter,* Greeley writes, "With unrelenting consistency in recent years, the Vatican has appointed to the American hierarchy men who are mean-spirited careerists—inept, incompetent, insensitive bureaucrats who are utterly indifferent to their clergy and laity. In all its two hundred-year history, the American hierarchy has never been in worse shape." Which is what Andrew Greeley has been saying for forty of those two hundred years.

■ The World Council of Churches was present at the Beijing conference on women. Many readers will no doubt remember the WCC. Among the speakers was Mercy Amba Oduyoye, a Ghanaian Methodist theologian, who said, "The Christianity in Africa today is 'bad news' because it brings us patriarchal structures and a European economic system of greed." Even if the product of that system, in the hands of religious bureaucrats who despise it, provides free trips to international conferences for angry Africans trained to condemn the benevolence by which they are oppressed. Included on the program also was Ada Maria Isasi, a Hispanic Catholic who teaches theology at Drew University. She declared, "We construct our own reality, what role we will play, what values we will live by." Also in the construction business is Delores Williams of Union Theological Seminary, New York, who expatiated on her "African-American women's resistance culture." She stated her belief that "God is now saying, 'Upon you women I will build my church.'" When all the talk is about liberation, that seems like an awful burden to assume.

■ Noteworthy statements and events are noted by *catholic trends,* a publication of the Catholic News Service. For instance, Father Michael Crosby, "a lecturer and author on biblical spirituality," spoke to a meeting titled "A Look at Prejudice," sponsored by the Dubuque Franciscan Lifelong Formation Team. Referring to the O. J. Simpson trial, he said, "It isn't O. J. on trial. It isn't Mark Fuhrman on trial. In many ways, every one of us is on trial." Come to think of it, it did turn out that way didn't it?

■ "Haydn? Schubert? Chopin? Schumann? Strauss? Mahler? Grieg? Sibelius? Puccini? Holst? Ralph Vaughan Williams? Dvorak? Poulenc? Barber?" The foregoing is the response of Robert Wilken of the University of Virginia to my comment here that little great music has been written since Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms. Some guys sure have a way with words.

■ Many years ago, Karol Wojtyla wrote a play called *The Jeweler's Shop,* and when he was here in New York as John Paul II a small company was going to produce it but then ran out of funds. A theater critic of the *New York Times* wrote that this proved that New York "can be one tough town." What he did not mention is that another company has been very successfully doing *The Jeweler's Shop* here and in major centers around the country. The *Times* report left readers assuming that it had closed. To get information about that ongoing and very popular production, write The Polish Theater Group of New York, 261 Driggs Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11222. (The *Times* has to date not corrected its error.)

■ Readers who are fiftysomething and more may remember when the avuncular Walter Cronkite was taken to be the rock-solid center of American common sense. Recall the ending of the evening news, "And that's the way it is, February 21, 1967" (or whatever the date happened to be), and I do think the majority of Americans pretty much believed him. Uncle Walter showed up on Larry King the other night. Caller: "You've been quoted as saying that you felt that most journalists were liberal, in fact that a good journalist was by nature a liberal." Uncle Walter: "I define liberal as a person who is not doctrinaire. That is a dictionary definition of liberal. That's opposed to 'liberal' as part of the political *spectrum . . . open to change, constantly, not* committed to any particular creed or doctrine, or whatnot, and in that respect I think that news people should be liberal." If we got him right, a liberal is someone who is doctrinaire about being relentlessly committed to noncommitment. The interesting thing, however, is not that Mr. Cronkite is confused but that he is so very desperate. Already back in 1988, addressing a dinner for People for the American Way (the people who brought "un-American activities" back to our political vocabulary), Cronkite declared: "I know liberalism isn't dead in this country. It simply has, temporarily we hope, lost its voice. . . . We know that Star Wars means uncontrollable escalation of the arms race. We know that the real threat to democracy is the half of the nation in poverty. . . . We know that no one should tell a woman she has to bear an unwanted child. . . . God Almighty,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we've got to shout these truths in which we believe from the housetops. Like that scene in the movie *Network,* we've got to throw open our windows and shout these truths to the streets and the heavens." As Mr. Cronkite says, a good journalist is "open to change, constantly, not committed to any particular creed or doctrine, or whatnot." "And that," as Walter Cronkite might say were he still doing the evening news, "is the way it is and was and ever will be. Amen."

■ Name this voice. "While intimate relationships have always been problematic, it seems in recent years we are witnessing a great deal of breakdown in our society. . . . But we must realize that now, more than ever, it is crucial to the overall health and well-being of all people that we be open to expanding our understanding and educating ourselves so we can eventually reach the goal of finding healthy solutions to our societal and physical ills." Give up? It's Dr. Joycelyn Elders, former Surgeon General, in her foreword to *Love Does No Harm* (Continuum) by the Rev. Marie M. Fortune, a United Church of Christ minister. The book promotes a sexual ethics of eroticized justice in relationships of mutual equality beyond patriarchal structures of exploitation in the hope that, as Dr. Elders puts it so strikingly, "we can eventually reach the goal of finding healthy solutions to our societal and physical ills." To ponder the loss that our public discourse has suffered as a consequence of Dr. Elders' dismissal is to be, well, grateful. (How on earth, do you suppose, are we managing to get along without a Surgeon General?)

■ While the media's coverage of the Pope's October visit was generally fair, there were, of course, exceptions. For instance, reporter Henry Allen in the *Washington Post*: "There are sixty million Catholics in America, and for many of them he also speaks with the voice of a conservative crank when he stonewalls on abortion, birth control, married priests, women priests, and so on." Our dictionary says that to "stonewall" is "to be uncooperative, obstructive, or evasive." On the causes favored by Mr. Allen and others, John Paul has certainly been uncooperative and is understandably charged with obstruction, but he has hardly been evasive. As for what one suspects is included in "and so on," the appropriate response is, Conservative Cranks of the World Unite!

■ It bears repeating. Ecumenism is not aimed at creating Christian unity where it does not exist but at giving fuller expression to the unity in which all Christians share. The following came to me after reading another attack on the claim of *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* that we are "brothers and sisters in Christ." In North Africa in the third century, the Donatists claimed to possess the authentic form of Christianity and refused to recognize others as Christian brothers and sisters. In his First Discourse on Psalm 33, St. Augustine had this to say: "They, by refusing to recognize our baptism, deny that we are their brethren; we, on the other hand, by not repeating theirs but recognizing it for our own, say to them: *Ye are our brethren.* They may say: 'Why are you looking for us, what do you want with us?' Let us reply: *Ye are our brethren.* They may say: 'Go away, we have no connection with you.' But we have an undoubted connection with you: we make confession of one and the same Christ, we ought to be in one Body, under one Head. 'Why are you seeking me,' he asks, 'if I am lost?' Gross absurdity, gross madness! Why are you seeking me, if I am lost? Why should I seek you except you are lost? 'Well then, if I am lost,' says he, 'how am I your brother?' Exactly as I may be told of you: *Thy brother was dead, and is come to life again; he was lost, and is found.* I adjure you, therefore, brethren, through the very heart of charity, by whose milk we are nourished, by whose bread we are strengthened, through Christ our Lord, through His meekness—for it is time for us to pour forth upon them great charity and abundant mercy, beseeching God on their behalf that now at last He may give them sound understanding, to come to their senses again and see themselves, and realize that they have no argument whatsoever against the truth; nothing is left to them but sickly spite, all the more feeble in proportion as it fancies itself formidable."

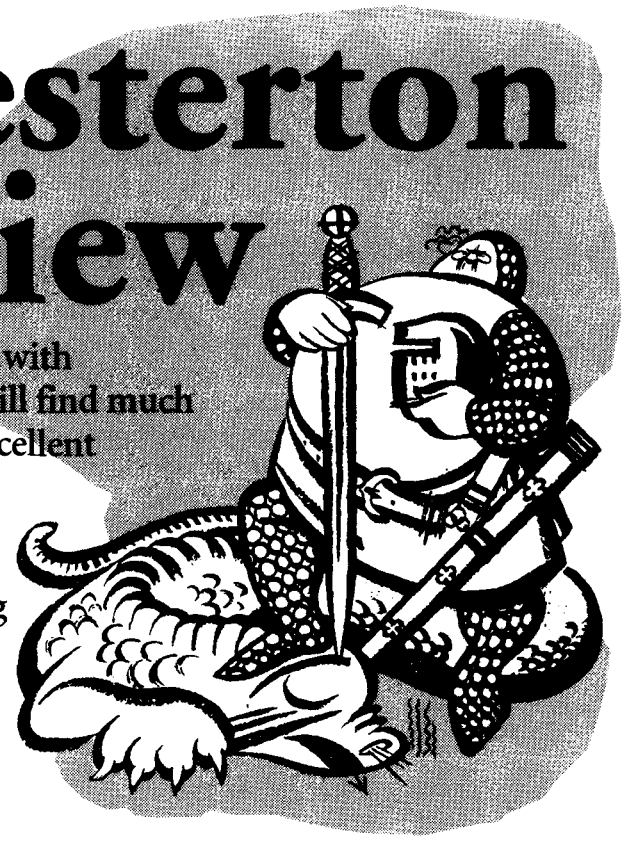
Sources: On Episcopal ordinations, news releases. Florence King on Molly Ivins and plagiarism, *American Enterprise,* November/December 1995.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT: On age for consent to have sex, *New York Times,* June 11, 1995. David Smolin on "lawless law," *Baylor Law Review,* Volume 47:119 (1995). J. Budziszewski on pop spirituality, *New Republic,* July 10, 1995. Gerald Early on Afrocentrism, *Civilization,* July/August 1995. "The Brief Statement" in *Christian News,* May 8, 1995. On the Coalition for Pagan Religious Rights, *Washington Post,* July 9, 1995. Cardinal Hume quoted, *National Catholic Reporter,* September 15, 1995. Joe Conason on Dinesh D'Souza, *New York Observer,* October 2, 1995. On Robert Gross, August 7, 1995 news release from The Strongheart Group. Frank Kermode on boring academics, *New York Times Book Review,* July 30, 1995. Richard Rorty on truth and moral agency, *New Republic,* July 31, 1995. The name "Clinton" banned in Nairobi, London *Times,* July 4, 1995. On Beverly Schnell's struggle against the state of Wisconsin, *Wall Street Journal,* September 19, 1995. Andrew Greeley on Catholic hierarchy in America, *National Catholic Reporter,* September 15, 1995. Quotations from WCC speakers at Beijing conference, *Ecumenical News International,* September 20, 1995. Michael Crosby on O. J. Simpson trial, *catholic trends,* October 21, 1995. Walter Cronkite quoted in Media Research Center newsletter, October 9, 1995. *Washington Post* comment on the Pope as conservative crank, cited in Media Research Center newsletter, October 9, 1995.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Special Offer to the

Chesterton Review



"Anyone concerned with traditional values will find much of interest in this excellent journal."

Ted Byfield, Founding Editor,
The Alberta Report

"There is something in every issue of the *Review* to surprise and delight me."

Garry Wills, author and critic

"SERIOUS AND LIVELY, SCHOLARLY AND POPULAR, ECUMENICAL AND PARTISAN ... A REBUKE TO THOSE WHO SUPPOSE SERIOUS WRITING CANNOT BE FUN TO READ OR THAT AN ORTHODOX VIEWPOINT MUST BE A NARROW ONE."

ROBERT P. GEORGE,
DEPT. OF POLITICS,
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY.

Subscribe now and save up to *30% off* the ordinary subscription rate.

Plus This Special Offer For New Subscribers:

For each $35.00 subscription to our quarterly, the new subscriber will also receive a ***free copy*** of one or more of the following special issues:

*❑ Twentieth Anniversary Special Issue	❑ Maurice Baring	❑ Charles Dickens
*❑ Ethics and Economics in Post-Communist Europe	❑ Father Brown and Detective Fiction	❑ Japanese Christian Writers
	❑ Christopher Dawson	❑ Karl Kraus and Aurel Kolnai
*❑ George Bernanos	❑ George Grant	❑ Cardinal Manning
*❑ C. S. Lewis	❑ Hilaire Belloc	❑ Chesterton and the Modernist Crisis

New subscribers receive a **free copy** of any one of our jumbo special issues (indicated by an asterisk) normally sold for $15.00 each **OR two free copies** of any of the regular special issues normally sold for $9.00. Please check which of the special issues you have chosen as your bonus.

Please enter my membership to the *Chesterton Review* for one/two years at $35.00 per year. (Outside Canada payable in U. S. dollars.)
❑ One year ($35.00) ❑ Two Years ($70.00)

Name.....

Address.....

City.....

Province/State ..... Postal/Zip Code .....

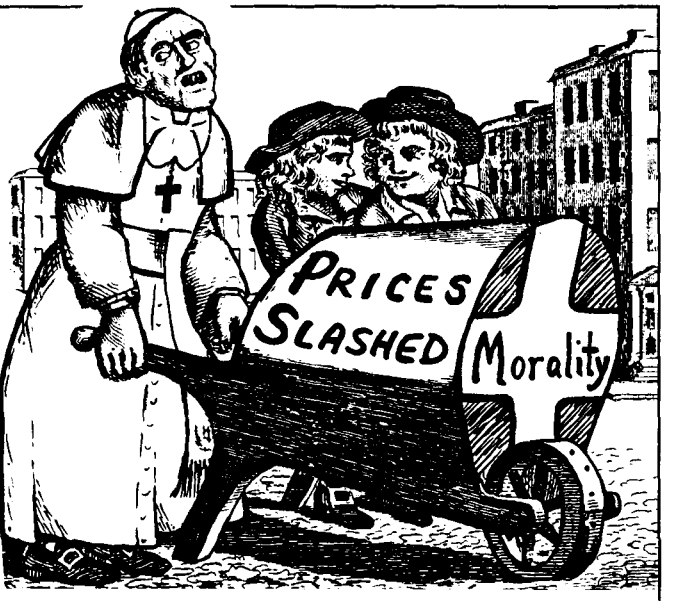
Charge to VISA #..... Expiry Date .....

FT

Make cheque payable to:
CHESTERTON REVIEW, 1437 College Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7N OW6 Canada **or for faster service for your VISA order call: (U.S.A.) PHONE or FAX 1-800-260-9363** Elsewhere, PHONE: 1-306-966-8917 or FAX: 1-306-966-8904

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Should the Pope Offer Discounts?



Catholicism says we're sinners and need to confess our sins to Christ, who is rich in mercy. But modernist Catholics say it's too "painful" to think about sin, and since people don't like to feel guilty, we should "ease up on the rules" — lower the standards. Thus mod Catholics want the Church to essentially forget her teachings on abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, premarital sex, the indissolubility of marriage, birth control, and the like.

Over a half-century ago, H. Richard Niebuhr summarized the credo of such a discount Christianity this way: "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." Today this is basically the message of liberal Protestantism. But God will not be mocked, and liberal Protestantism is dying.

According to market economics, if you want more buyers, lower the price. But it doesn't work that way in the economy of grace. Liberal Catholics would give us cheap grace, which, said Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "means the justification of sin" and is merely "the grace we bestow on ourselves." Yes, this is appealing, but only superficially so. The trendy trinkets of cheap grace don't actually satisfy the human heart. The People of God want the Pearl of Great Price. Which is why orthodox religious orders, such as Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity, are growing but the flaky, liberated ones are dying, and why the dissenting Church in Holland is moribund but the loyalist Church in Africa is booming.

Which is also why people read the NEW OXFORD REVIEW. A Catholic monthly magazine, we offer discount prices for new subscribers, but, as with the Pope, we don't offer discounts on the Truth. We challenge the dissenting, bargain-basement Catholics, and present the full splendor of Catholic Truth in all its richness. "First-rate" is what *National Review* calls us.

Amazingly, we're also ecumenical in spirit. But we embrace and engage non-Catholics at the highest common denominator of faith, not the lowest. Whether or not you're Catholic, if you want more nourishment than cheap, watered-down Christianity allows, subscribe today!

(Please allow 2 to 8 weeks for delivery of first issue)

SPECIAL DISCOUNT RATES FOR FIRST-TIME SUBSCRIBERS

- ☐ One-year subscription ..... $14 (regularly $19)
- ☐ One-year student, unemployed, or retired person's subscription ..... $12 (regularly $16)
- ☐ Two-year subscription ..... $23 (regularly $35)
- ☐ One-year non-U.S. subscription ..... US$24 (regularly $29) Payment must be drawn in U.S. Dollars
- ☐ Sample copy $3.50

Send coupon or letter. Make check payable to NEW OXFORD REVIEW. Mail to:

NEW OXFORD REVIEW
Room 137
1069 Kains Ave.
Berkeley CA 94706

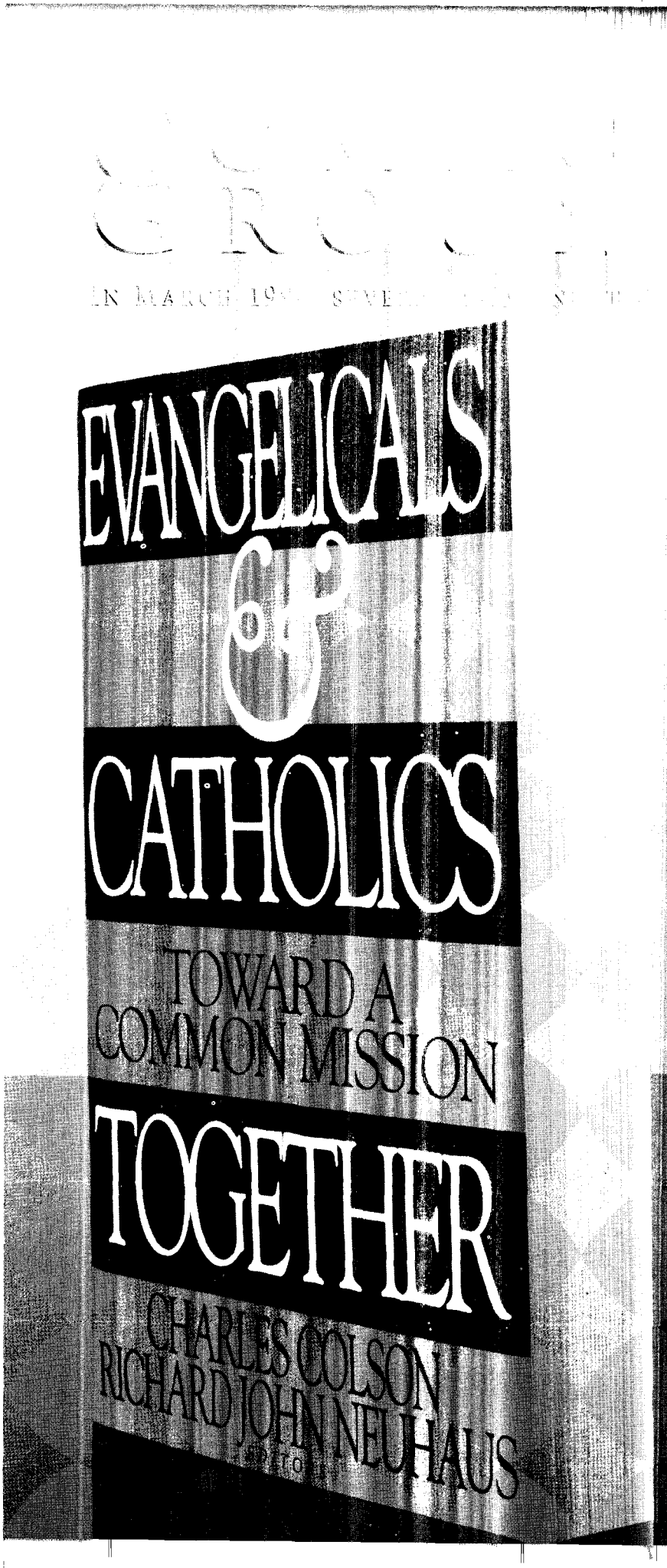
NAME (Please print or type)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



N.

ANGELICAL PROTESTANT AND ROMAN CATHOLIC LEADERS GATHERED TOGETHER FOR ONE HISTORIC PURPOSE...

U N I T Y.

Richard John Neuhaus

Charles Colson

...tory marred by denominational differences and religious ...pes, a group of modern church leaders has come together ...ss areas of agreement and common ground. Based on a ...denominational statement issued in March 1994, co-editors ...s Colson and Richard John Neuhaus bring together a ... collection of essays that mark a new spirit of cooperation.

...ng issues, as well as those upon which many remain divided, ...dressed with foresight and conviction. Regardless of which ... the Reformation you stand, *Evangelicals & Catholics* ...ther provides a basis for intelligent discourse.

MARK NOLL — J. I. PACKER
GEORGE WEIGEL — CHARLES COLSON
...THER AVERY DULLES — RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

"One of the most important books of the decade."
— **PROFESSOR PETER J. KREEFT**
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY,
BOSTON COLLEGE

"I have no doubt that the population of heaven will be greatly increased because of this statement."
— **DR. BILL BRIGHT**
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT OF
CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST INT'L

"This book is a giant step toward understanding not only our differences, but how common is our goal and how much we share theologically."
— **JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR**
ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK

WORD PUBLISHING

Available at bookstores everywhere, or call 1-800-251-4000.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED